



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

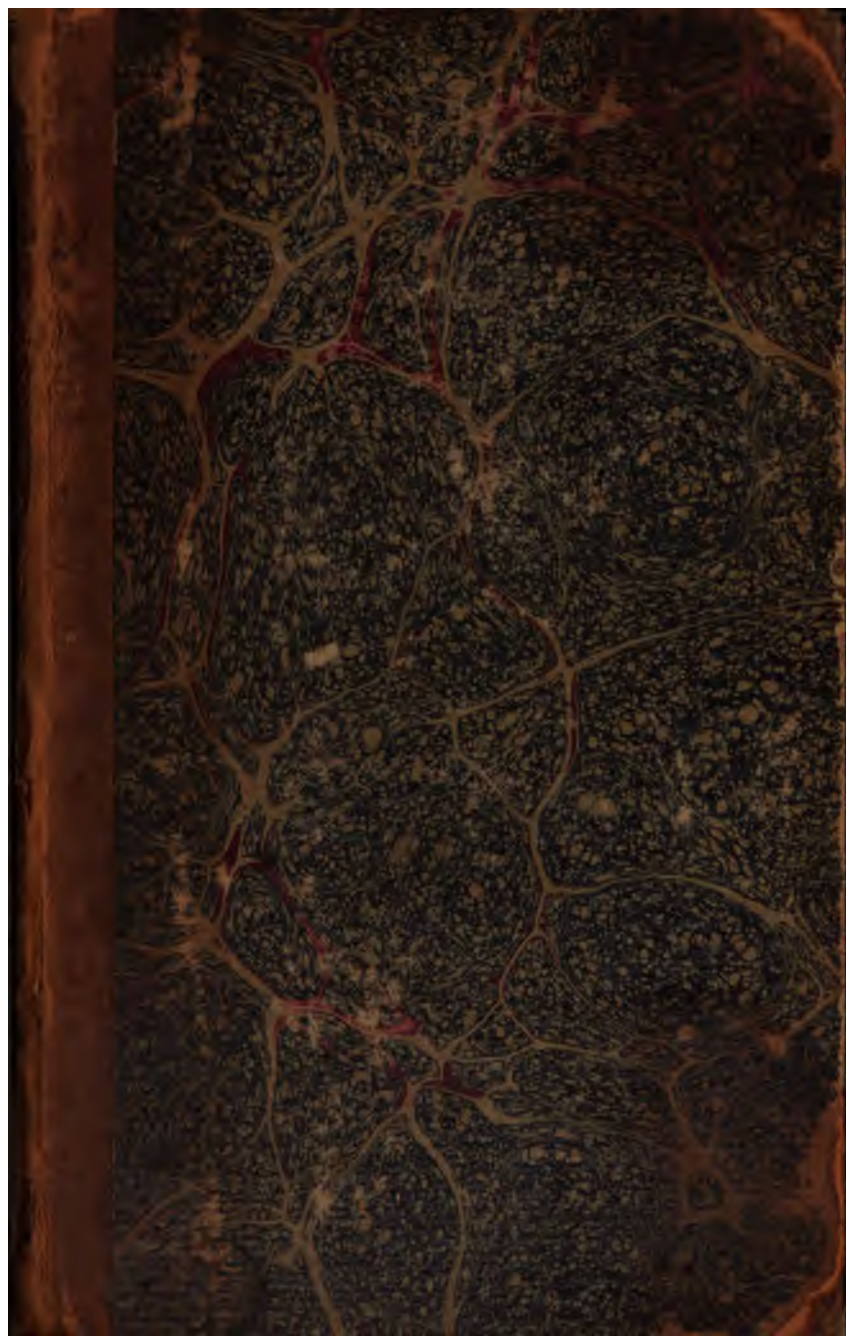
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



19

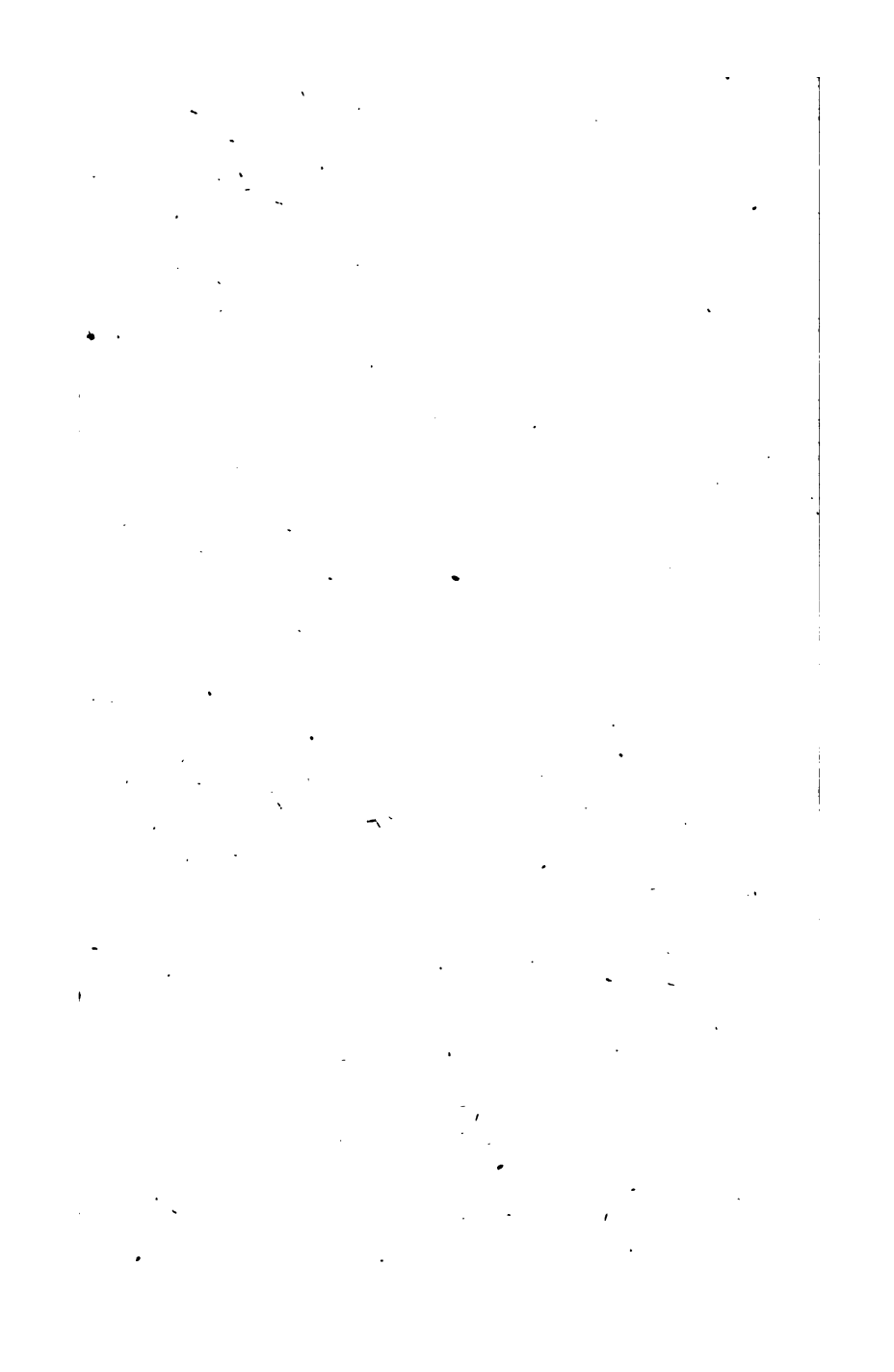
13006 f: 28

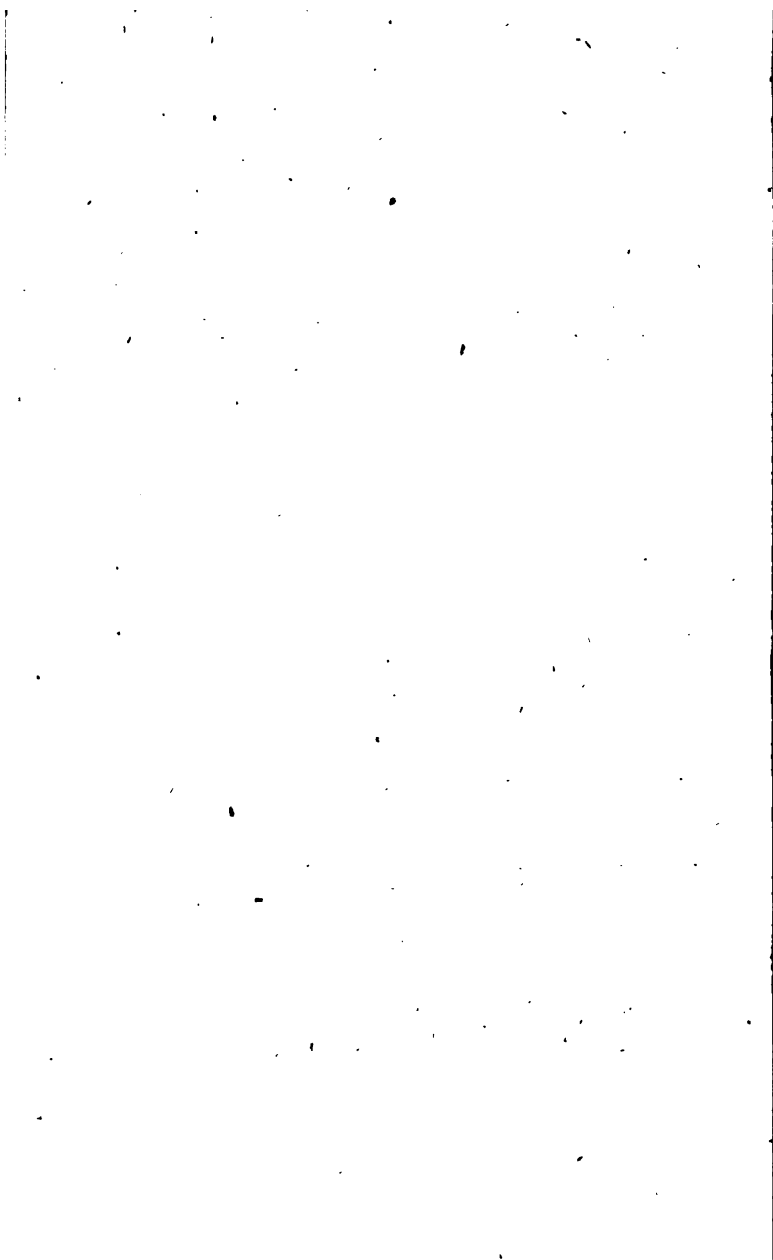


5



600095128V









Rev. John Evans, A.M.

Published Sept. 1. 1800. by H.D. Symonds, 20 Paternoster Row.

Giles Melford

THE
SEQUEL

Totnes.

TO THE
SKETCH OF THE DENOMINATIONS
OF THE
CHRISTIAN WORLD;

BEING
TESTIMONIES

IN BEHALF OF
CHRISTIAN CANDOUR AND UNANIMITY,
BY DIVINES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND,
AND AMONG THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

To which is prefixed,
AN ESSAY
ON THE
RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT
IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

By **JOHN EVANS, A. M.**
MASTER OF A SEMINARY FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF PUPILS,
FULLEN'S ROW, ISLINGTON.

Is CHRIST divided? PAUL.

Second Edition.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street, Fleet Lane,
FOR H. D. SYMONDS, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1801.



DEDICATION.

TO

SAMUEL BRENT, Esq.

ROTHERHITHE.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I first announced my intention of undertaking *the private tuition of youth*, you immediately entrusted me with the care of your sons, and thus placed me in the important province of an instructor of the rising generation. To you, therefore, I respectfully inscribe this little publication; which is chiefly designed for their benefit and improvement. No original work of mine could have laid an equal claim to your patronage and attention.

To have the minds of youth furnished with the *principles*, and made acquainted with the *spirit* of the Christian religion, would prove, I am persuaded, the most effectual *preservative* against the *infidelity* and the *uncharitableness* of the present age.

Accordingly in the *Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World*, I have attempted to state the general doctrines of revealed religion; the opinions by which its sects are discriminated, and the purposes to which diversity of religious sentiment should be applied. The very candid manner in which this work has been received by all parties, together with its rapid and extensive sale, demands my warmest thanks; and has, indeed, emboldened me to proceed to the completion of the plan which I had there, in part, executed.

In this *second* publication, (which is a *sequel* to the preceding, and which is now humbly presented to the public) I have brought together and concentrated into one focus, the *testimonies* of certain respectable Protestant writers, in behalf of the rational and pacific *spirit* of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Infidels, especially those of the present day, are pleased to assert, that the Christian religion prohibits the exercise of reason, demands an implicit faith in the doc-

trines it promulgates, and establishes, among the weak and the credulous, a system of uncharitableness, intolerance, and persecution. Hence they think themselves justified, not only in withholding their assent to the evidence it proposes; but in characterizing it by epithets of marked reprobation. This, however, is a palpable misrepresentation of its genius and tendency. For from *these testimonies* of the firm and enlightened advocates of revelation, unbelievers may learn, that it is worthy of a divine origin, and deserving of universal acceptance; zealots may be taught how to conduct themselves towards their brethren of different sentiments, while the united declarations of this most respectable *cloud of witnesses* form an eloquent and an useful comment on the injunction of our blessed Saviour to his disciples, *A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.*

Very considerable pains, sir, have been taken in selecting and transcribing the subsequent testimonies. But of the weight

due to the several authors, we shall judge according to our own peculiar sentiments. It is not, therefore, expected that the approbation of every reader will be obtained, though I have been careful to admit no one writer, who has not, in his day, been distinguished for his genius, his literature, and his piety. Most persons will here meet with their favourite authors; and to me, in the execution of the present work, it was a matter of indifference whether they were of *Paul*, or of *Apollos*, or of *Cephas*, provided they were of *Christ*. It may be also added, that I have not availed myself of every theological writer which might have been procured; nor have I inserted every paragraph in behalf of candour and unanimity, which is to be found in the writings of the authors which are here introduced. Indeed my chief design is to shew the avowed *enemies*, and to remind the *bigoted* professors of revelation, that wise and good men, of all denominations, have in their calm and collected moments considered the right of private judgment, in

matters of religion, to be the badge of Protestantism; and have deemed the exercise of charity towards those who differed from them to be the ornament and glory of the Christian profession.

I have, fir, confined myself to *deceased* writers, that I might avoid swelling the work to a size which ordinary readers would not have leisure to peruse, or ability to purchase. Otherwise I might have enriched it with many valuable testimonies, in behalf of candour and unanimity, from *living* writers of the three principal classes of professed Christians, into which the testimonies are here distributed. Thus it is manifest, that the mild and conciliating spirit of Christianity is so far from being extinct, that it still continues to produce the same benevolent effects, for which, in former ages of the church, it has been justly celebrated. Let not the infidel then imagine, that the benignant influence of the gospel is circumscribed within any one period, or limited to any particular century. It is as immutable as the *Deity* who first gave it. It is as permanent as that *eternity* for which it

is eminently calculated to prepare us. *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man like the flower of the field. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away ; but the word of the Lord, with respect both to its purity and its benevolence, endureth for ever.*

A modern infidel, sir, of political notoriety is, however, so profoundly ignorant of the nature and tendency of *revealed religion*, that, in a recent publication, he pronounces the scriptures to be sources of delusion, and records of wickedness. He has also indulged himself in scurrilous invectives against those who believe in their inspiration, and against those whose province it is statedly to explain and enforce their contents. But we must not be surprized—ignorance, calumny, and falsehood, are the means by which the empire of infidelity hath been raised and perpetuated. Christians of the plainest understandings *know* that their religion inculcates a rational piety, and prescribes the purest morality, which can be presented to the children of men. If this piety be not interwoven in their characters, and this morality exemplified in their conduct—to the want

of religion, and not to religion itself, should these deficiencies be imputed. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, who understood more of the nature and experienced more of the influence of Christianity, than any individual now living, emphatically denominates it *the doctrine according to godliness*. There is, therefore, a degree of injustice and of cruelty, in charging it with the vices and the infirmities of its professors. But permit me to ask the unbeliever who exults in these objections, do *all* the advocates of *natural religion* maintain a rational faith, and exhibit an unblemished reputation? In general, is it not notoriously otherwise? Does not their rejection of revelation excite a suspicion, that they strive to evade the force of its precepts; and to rescue themselves from that wholesome restraint, which the awfulness of its penalties imposes upon human conduct? With respect to infirmity, the infidel and the Christian stand on one common ground; nor can either of them pretend to sinless perfection. But were we fairly to estimate the practical influence of their respective creeds, I

should feel no apprehension for *the Christian*, provided he cherished that temper, and adopted that train of conduct recommended by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Were men to take the same pains to *believe*, which they take to *disbelieve* THE GOSPEL, the triumphs of infidelity would cease—its attendant vices disappear, and *Christianity*, in its purest and most benignant form, would (agreeable to the intimations of ancient prophecy) reach to *the uttermost parts of the earth*. To ascribe uncharitableness and persecution to *the religion of Christ*, is to ascribe darkness to the sun, or disorder to the established laws of the universe!

This little publication, sir, may also prove serviceable to young men who are educating for the Christian ministry. It may bring them acquainted with theological writers of enlarged sentiments and genuine liberality, and thus prevent them from entertaining those contracted notions of the most amiable religion in the world, into which young ministers, from their want of better information, are

known to have been precipitated. Too frequently, alas! initiated into the dogmas of a party, and driven by *a zeal not according to knowledge*, they have impeded their own usefulness, and injured the interests of the Christian church. Uncharitableness is the germ of persecution. It is, therefore, of the highest importance, that those, who in the public services of the sanctuary, are destined to lead the devotion, and in a measure to form the religious temper of multitudes, should themselves drink deep into the liberal spirit of the New Testament, and assiduously cherish that benign temper which advances and adorns *the truth as it is in Jesus*.

Nor can I, sir, conclude, without expressing a hope that my own congregation, and, indeed, that all serious and candid professors of Christianity, will derive some benefit from the perusal of the following pages. In these times of instability and of lukewarmness, *this selection* may serve to confirm their faith—to enliven their hopes—and to invigorate their religious affections. Here they will

contemplate *near fourscore* servants of Christ, men of talents, erudition, and sterling piety (the mitred prelate, the plain presbyter, and the still plainer quaker) appearing before the tribunal of the public, and giving in their respective *testimonies* in behalf of that sublime religion to which they in common owed their dearest hopes and their choicest consolations. Though on earth they may have stood aloof from each other, distinguished by their little peculiarities; yet, in that portion of their writings, here introduced, impregnated with the unadulterated spirit of the gospel, they seem jointly to maintain, that to acknowledge *Christ to be the Son of God*, and *to love one another*, are the two primary articles of our holy religion. Meeting each other on these evangelical principles, how gratifying is it to the best feelings of the heart, to realize their junction around the throne of God! *They*, and *all* the true followers of Jesus Christ, of every sentiment, and of every description, *a multitude which no man can number*, shall come *from the north and from the south—*

from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with those illustrious patriarchs, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Exhilarating thought! Transporting prospect! Towards that august period may our eyes be steadily directed. For an union with that glorious assembly may we be prepared, endeavouring, by every possible method, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

In the introductory essay, sir, a perspicuous brevity has been studied; and it is founded on a declaration of Jesus Christ, that it may generate a stronger impression upon the minds of Christian youth, for whom the whole work is chiefly intended. To the candour of the reader, and to the blessing of heaven, I now sincerely commend it—persuaded that the cause it *means* to serve, is, *the cause of God and truth*—and will therefore prove, notwithstanding the occasional infirmities of its friends, and the reiterated opposition of its enemies—*finally triumphant!*

You will, sir, I trust, excuse my having prefixed your name to this dedica-

tion. It is the most expressive mode which I had in my power, of testifying my gratitude for the kindness and attention with which you, and your worthy family, have uniformly honoured me.

That your *two sons*, and my *other pupils**, may embrace upon the fullest conviction, at an early period of life, THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, which is equally remote from *indifference* and *bigotry*; and that they may one day honourably and usefully fill up the stations which an indulgent Providence shall assign them upon the theatre of human life—and for which their present course of education is preparing them, are, dear sir, the unfeigned wishes, and fervent prayer, of

Your much obliged friend,

J. EVANS.

Saville Row, Mile End Road,

April 6th, 1796.

* The sons of Joseph Slater, Esq. to whom I am also much indebted for the *important trust* he has reposed in me.

CONTENTS.

ESSAY on the Right of Private Judgment, &c. . . . Page xvii

PART I.

BY DIVINES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

	Page		Page
STILLINGFLEET	1	<i>Wake</i>	49
<i>Chillingworth</i>	5	<i>Waterland</i>	53
<i>Hall</i>	7	<i>Seed</i>	55
<i>Hales</i>	12	<i>Balguy</i>	57
<i>Hammond</i>	15	<i>Sykes</i>	62
<i>Taylor</i>	16	<i>Hervey</i>	63
<i>Wilkins</i>	21	<i>Hoadley</i>	66
<i>Barrow</i>	22	<i>Sherlock</i>	68
<i>Leighton</i>	25	<i>Secker</i>	69
<i>Hopkins</i>	28	<i>Fortin</i>	71
<i>Tillotson</i>	31	<i>Newton</i>	73
<i>Cave</i>	33	<i>Taylor</i>	76
<i>Burnet</i>	36	<i>Blackburn</i>	78
<i>Lucas</i>	38	<i>Law</i>	81
<i>Prideaux</i>	41	<i>Wesley</i>	83
<i>Whitby</i>	42	<i>Horne</i>	87
<i>Clark</i>	46		

PART II.

BY DIVINES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

	Page		Page
<i>Campbell</i>	90	<i>Gray</i>	101
<i>Scougal</i>	94	<i>Cuming</i>	103
<i>Craig</i>	97	<i>Webster</i>	107

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
<i>Leechman</i>	108	<i>Shaw</i>	117
<i>Robertson</i>	111	<i>Gerard</i>	118
<i>Margill</i>	115	<i>Logan</i>	123

PART III.

BY DIVINES AMONG THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

	Page		Page
<i>Doddridge</i>	126	<i>Taylor</i>	174
<i>Baxter</i>	133	<i>Duchal</i>	177
<i>Barclay</i>	136	<i>Benfon</i>	179
<i>Bates</i>	139	<i>Leland</i>	181
<i>Howe</i>	142	<i>Chandler</i>	184
<i>Whitf</i>	144	<i>Lardner</i>	187
<i>Gale</i>	148	<i>Orton</i>	190
<i>Pierce</i>	151	<i>Furneau</i>	192
<i>Evans</i>	154	<i>Price</i>	195
<i>Calamy</i>	156	<i>Robinson</i>	197
<i>Grove</i>	158	<i>Evans</i>	199
<i>Abernethy</i>	160	<i>Towgood</i>	202
<i>Neal</i>	163	<i>Stennett</i>	205
<i>Smith</i>	165	<i>Kippis</i>	207
<i>Watts</i>	167	<i>Grosvener</i>	209
<i>Foster</i>	171		

AN ESSAY
ON THE
RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT, &c.

In necessariis—Unitas;
In non necessariis—Libertas;
In utrisque—Charitas.—

Rise—let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive,
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden in our share of woe.

MILTON.

WE are informed in various parts of the evangelical history, that Jesus Christ upbraided the Pharisees with their obstinacy, and with their indolence. Very attentive to the appearances of nature around them, they should have been still more attentive to the *signs of the times*. The advent of the Messiah had been long ago predicted, and its attendant circumstances minutely specified. They, however, disregarded these evidences of our Saviour's Messiahship, and with this inattention he thus reproaches them. *When ye see a cloud arise out of the west, straight way ye say, there cometh*

a shower, and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, there will be heat, and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it, that ye do not discern this time? And,

WHY EVEN OF YOURSELVES JUDGE YE NOT WHAT IS RIGHT?

Jesus Christ, by this expostulatory reproof, evidently intimates, that it is our indispensable duty to exercise our *reason* in matters of religion; and this duty is the more strongly inculcated by reproaching the Pharisees with a neglect of it. Other passages of a similar import might be selected from the New Testament. But to this pointed declaration of our Blessed Saviour, I would now wish the attention of the reader to be steadily directed.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is frequently divided into two parts; that which is to be *believed*, and that which is to be *practised*. Both these parts are delivered to us in *the scriptures*; and it is our business to consider what information is there communicated respecting them. The speculative part of revelation has a special reference to the understanding, and contains doctrines which require our belief. These doctrines are declarations made concerning the nature, the properties, and the relations of certain persons or subjects with which we are concerned. The persons and subjects in which we are interested

as intelligent and accountable agents, are, *God—Jesus Christ—the gospel—the present state, and the world to come.* The declarations or doctrines respecting these most momentous points of Revelation, must be the subjects of our enquiry. We must use our reason or judging faculty, not only to ascertain the evidences with which the gospel is attended; but also to find out the *specific* meaning of the inspired penmen, concerning these interesting subjects.

The same spirit of investigation should be applied to the practical branches of revelation. Is it of consequence to know what we are to believe? It is equally important that we know what we are to practise. In perusing the scriptures, we must therefore use our *reason* to ascertain the nature, number, and importance of the precepts, moral and positive, which it is incumbent upon us to obey. We must enquire into the origin of these duties, into the motives by which they are enforced, and into the advantages with which the discharge of them is accompanied. The duties we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our fellow creatures, together with the right administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, claim our particular attention. These precepts and institutions, as well as the doctrines which have been already mentioned, are contained in the word of God.

But alas!—in all ages of the church, different opinions have been entertained respecting them,

and this dissonance of sentiment has given rise to violence, confusion, and even to the shedding of blood. The scriptures were wrested out of the hands of the people. A particular interpretation was imposed upon their contents. Some dared not *to judge even of themselves*. Others who dared were punished with an inquisitorial severity. But religion is a personal concern; the scripture should be in the possession of every individual, and our *reason* should be exercised in the fear of God, to ascertain its true meaning. The inspired writers would not communicate error for our belief; nor recommend evil for our practice. But unless we are attentive, cautious, and humble, we may misinterpret their writings, and yet confidently imagine ourselves to be acquainted with their genuine sentiments.

So far was Jesus Christ from prohibiting, or even discouraging the exercise of reason in matters of religion, that he exhorts his disciples to the use of it, and condemns his enemies for the neglect of it. Prophecies and miracles, the two most capital evidences of his Messiahship, were a direct address to this ennobling principle of our nature. His apostles also, in their epistles to the primitive Churches, inculcate the same important doctrine, and press it home with great solemnity upon the hearts and consciences of the first converts to the Christian religion. Nor in the succeeding ages of the church

have those ministers of the gospel; who *understood* the commission of their divine Master, ceased to appeal, upon the awful topic of religion, to the *understandings* of mankind:

'Tis *reason* our great Master holds so dear;

'Tis *reason's* injured rights his wrath resents;

'Tis *reason's* voice obey'd his glories crown'd.

YOUNG.

Many, indeed, are the inducements which should operate with Christians, to *judge even of themselves what is right* in matters of religion. A few of the most obvious, and consequently the most intelligible, are here respectfully submitted to the attention of the rising generation.

1. *We should judge even of ourselves* concerning the religion of Christ; because the faculty of judging lies in our possession?

The Divine Being gives nothing in vain. It is the characteristic of wisdom to adapt certain means to certain ends. The possession of a mean indicates an end. Who ever doubted that the eye was formed for seeing, the ear for hearing, and the other senses to perform their respective functions? Equally improper would it be to doubt whether reason was given us to ascertain what revelation presents to the human mind. We find ourselves in the possession of a faculty by which we receive ideas—compare them with one another, and then draw

a conclusion respecting the whole. In common life we readily exercise this discriminating faculty, to determine what is good and what is evil. Is it said, that reason should be laid aside when religion claims our attention? For what purpose? Are you afraid that the Christian faith should be scrutinized? If you are, you do it a manifest injustice. If you are not afraid, for God's sake, do not subject your religion to cruel and unjust suspicions. "It is an error, says an excellent divine*, to discard the use of *reason* in religion, and inveigh against human nature, out of respect to revelation and the grace God. 'Tis not more certain that the eye could do little, in some cases, without a telescope, than that the telescope can be of no use without the eye; and our calling in the mechanism of art to improve that of nature, is a concession that nature is the foundation of art, which only finishes what the other begins. Thus revelation is a kind of supplement to *reason*; and *grace* to nature; the gospel brings new light, and new enforcements of strength; but the *old* faculties are still employed, and Divine assistance to be expected upon no other terms but our making the *best* use of these." It is, indeed, only by the use of reason, that we can judge of the *external* and the *internal* evidences of the gospel, and maintain our ground against Infidels, Jews, and Pagans. That reason, there-

* Grove of Taunton.

fore, should lie dormant respecting the *doctrines* and *duties* of this same gospel, is a position at once both absurd and ridiculous. Reason indeed has its limits, and these limits are known to wise and good men. The *sober* use of this faculty in all our affairs, and especially in the momentous concerns of the soul, cannot be too much commended. Both the doctrines and the duties of the gospel of Jesus Christ, should be carefully examined, firmly believed, and zealously maintained. Our religion has nothing to fear from the minutest enquiry, or from the severest investigation. Like the works of nature, the farther we examine it, the more fully will its excellence appear, and the more effectually will its glory be displayed !

2. By *not judging even of yourselves* concerning the religion of Christ, you are exposed to error in belief, and to folly in practice.

Whence arose the absurd dogmas, and superstitious fooleries of Popery? From having given up the use of reason in the affairs of religion. Reason is the monitor placed by Almighty God in the breast of every individual, to preserve his intelligent and accountable creatures from the commission of evil. In this present state, we are strangely deceived by appearances; and examination becomes necessary to rectify even our most ordinary judgments. Does not the ignorant and

uninformed contemplator of the heavens imagine a star to be no bigger than a diamond, and supposes the sun to be no larger than a circular plate about twelve inches in diameter? Philosophy, however, has pronounced both these judgments to be extremely erroneous. In a similar manner, a *superficial* acquaintance with the scriptures has led thousands to believe that they contained sentiments which are incompatible with the perfections of God, and inimical to the best interests of mankind. It is not so much the possession, as it is the *proper use* of reason, which constitutes the superiority of man over the brute creation. The freaks of enthusiasm, and the mummeries of superstition, arise from the dormant state of this faculty in the breast of the individual. In ecclesiastical history we uniformly find, that reason is decried by enthusiasts and impostors; but our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ acts a very different part, and manifests a very different spirit. He calls on all to examine. He condemns them for the want of examination. He even warns the deluded Jews of the long train of evils which would necessarily arise from their indolence; and thus affords the strongest incentive to his disciples to exercise the right of private judgment, where the important affairs of religion are concerned. Would to God! that his followers had been equally zealous to explain, recommend, and

practise this essential duty ! A modern prelate of considerable eminence*, alluding to former times, when first heathenism, and afterwards Popery, prevailed in this country ; remarks, concerning this subject, “ Had the use of reason been abandoned in the affairs of religion, we might have been still plucking mistletoe with the Druids, or mixing a little flower and water into the substance of the incomprehensible God ! ”

3. *By not judging even of yourselves concerning the religion of Christ, Protestants stand chargeable with gross inconsistency.*

The whole Christian world, (excepting an inconsiderable portion of it) was once overspread with Popery. Our forefathers, galled by its yoke, at length disclaimed pontifical usurpation, and boldly asserted the right of private judgment. To attain the invaluable privilege of thinking for themselves, they were grievous sufferers. We, their descendants, acknowledge the justness of their cause, glory in the exertions which they made ; and are come into the possession of blessings which they purchased with their blood ! For us, therefore, to lay aside our judging faculty, when the doctrines and duties of religion are the subject of attention, is a palpable inconsistency ; and to discourage by any one method, the exercise of it in others, is downright Popery. It is a matter of indiffer-

* Dr. Watson, the present Bishop of Landaff.

ence under what specious name it chooses to conceal itself. In Calvinism, Arminianism, Arianism, Socinianism, or indeed in any other *ism* which the restless ingenuity of man has devised—Intolerance is equally contrary to the genius of our religion, and equally subversive of the peace and happiness of mankind. Strange as the title may sound in our ears, such kind of Christians, wherever they are found, may be termed *Papish Protestants*; and this motley title is too applicable to many of the professors of Christianity. For their sincerity and good intentions we give them ample credit; but it is certainly no breach of charity to say of them, they understand not the nature, nor have they imbibed the spirit of the New Testament.

“ If *Protestants*” (says * the celebrated apologist for the Quakers, speaking of uncharitableness and intolerance) “ do justly abhor *these* things in *Papists*, is it not *sad* that they should do the *like* themselves? A thing, that at their first appearance, when they were in their primitive innocence, they did not think on, as appears by that saying of Luther—*Neither pope nor bishop, nor any other man, hath power to oblige a Christian to one syllable, except it be by his own consent.* And again, *I call boldly to Christians, that neither man or angel can impose any law upon them but ſc*

* Barclay.

far as they will, for we are free of all. And when he appeared at the diet of Spiers before the emperor, in a particular conference he had before the Archbishop of Triers, and the Elector of Brandenburg, when there seemed no possibility of agreeing him with his opposers, they asking him *what remedy seemed to him most fit?* he answered, *the counsel that Gamaliel proposed to the Jews, that if this design was of God it would stand; if not, it would vanish,* which he said ought to content the pope. For this counsel supposeth, that those that are tolerated may be wrong; and yet how soon did the same Luther, ere he was well secure himself, press the Elector of Saxony to banish poor Corolostadius, because he could not, in all things, submit to *his* judgment? And certainly it is not without ground reported, that it smote Luther to the heart (so that he needed to be comforted) when he was informed that Corolostadius, in his letter to his congregation, styled himself *a man banished for conscience, by the procurement of MARTIN LUTHER!*"

This account of the conduct of our great Reformer should be impressed upon the minds of Protestants, and might prove an incentive to that consistency of character which, were it uniformly cultivated, would constitute the glory of the reformed churches. By abandoning this spirit of intolerance, both in principle and in practice, we shall prove ourselves the followers of Jesus

Christ, the imitators of the apostles, and thus hasten the coming of the Messiah's kingdom !

Fourthly and lastly—By *not judging even of ourselves*, concerning the religion of Christ, that just *conviction* of mind is excluded, which ensures firmness of belief and steadiness of practice.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is accompanied with a train of evidences suited to its nature, and sufficiently ample to command the assent of every reasonable being. The contemplation of its prophecies, its miracles, its internal character, and its first propagation amongst Jews and Gentiles, has a necessary tendency to produce conviction. Truth and duty being intimately connected, we have reason to conclude, that a settled belief will, under the blessing of God, generate an uniform practice. One man believes in the existence of a Supreme Being, because his parents and instructors have assured him there *is* a Deity. Another man believes there is a God, because he has considered and investigated the works of creation. Which of these men is the most likely to love and fear him? The question requires not an answer. Apply this reasoning to the *other* great articles of natural and revealed religion, and the same conclusion may be drawn with equal justice. He who takes up his belief upon proper grounds, is the more certain of living beneath its influence, and dying by its support. The belief of the gospel rests on the most *rational* conviction. You can-

not complain of a want of evidence, though you may want that patience and docility which are requisite to consider this evidence in its due extent. The citadel of the Christian faith is founded upon a *rock*, and *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it* *.

* One of the most popular of the present deistical writers, having misrepresented and ridiculed the several books of scripture, exultingly compares himself, towards the close of his performance, to a woodman, who passing through a forest with an axe on his shoulder, had levelled the trees with the ground. Such is the wit with which he embellishes, and such the modesty with which he announces his own achievements. Infatuated man! neither the sharpness of thine axe, nor the strength of thy blow, could possibly avail. In thy rage for destruction, thou hadst forgotten that thine aim was directed against *the tree of life*, which is *of God's own right hand planting*, and whose fruit is for *the healing of the nations*!

Naturalists have observed, that such is the goodness of Providence, that wherever any species of poison grows, there also will an antidote be found to counteract its fatal tendency. *The Age of Reason* has received many excellent answers, both from Churchmen and Dissenters. None of them, however, possesses greater merit, or deserves a more general perusal, than *The Apology for the Bible*, by the present Bishop of Landaff. Youth who are the most likely to be led away by the sophistry of Deism, should have this production put into their hands. In this judicious performance, they will find the knowledge of the divine—the ability of the scholar, and the serious, candid spirit of the Christian, happily and seasonably united. As an antidote to modern infidelity in general, the reader is referred to the present Bishop of London's *Charge to the Clergy*, for 1794.—*Paley's Evidences of Christianity*, (of which a good abridgment has been published) and *Dr. Priestley's Observations on the Increase of Infidelity*.

Let us then be studious of exercising the right of private judgment in the investigation of the scriptures ; for *in them* (said our Saviour) *ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.* With the free and impartial search of the scriptures, the interests of religion are essentially connected. “ The faith and practice of Christians,” says an ingenious writer *, “ have been often perverted, and their consciences have been subjected to the traditions and commandments of men. They who were misled, fell into this corruption and slavery, by neglecting *to search the scriptures.* They were delivered out of it by that pure and complete information, which is to be derived from *the word of God.* It was after the church of Rome had taken away the key of knowledge, and forbidden the people the use of *this book*, that she was able to impose the full weight of that grievous yoke under which the Christian world long groaned. And it was when our forefathers presumed to open *this book*, that they began to make themselves *free.* From hence they derived irresistible weapons. By *the light of scripture*, they exposed to scorn the fabulous legends, the absurdities, the idolatry, and the uncharitable spirit of those who had kept them in bondage. The various forms of error, with all the sanction which they derived from authority,

* Principal Hill of St. Andrews.

custom, and superstition, were unable to stand before the truth. And *the search of the scriptures* hath established that rational system of faith, that spiritual worship, those rights of private judgment and mutual toleration, and those pure conceptions of Christian duty which are the *glory* of the reformed churches. If ever a night of superstition shall again overspread the Christian world, it will arise from that *neglect* of the scriptures which grows with the impiety of *modern times*; for the ignorant are always an easy prey to imposture, while every *well-instructed* Christian raiseth in his place a mound against the return of spiritual tyranny."

If then the scripture be the *only* rule of faith and practice—if our *reason* should be exercised in the fear of God, to recognize its evidences and ascertain its import—if this invaluable privilege be common to the professors of Christianity; why, on account of difference of opinion, should they indulge themselves in mutual recrimination—ascend the tribunal of the Almighty, and hurl at each other the thunder-bolts of divine vengeance? Cease, O *Christian*, from such *unchristian* practices! *These* are the deeds which have given infidels their triumphs—lacerated the feelings of pious men, and caused the system of Christianity to bleed at every pore! Thou who renouncest infallibility, renounce also the imposition of thy creed upon the consciences of thy

brethren. Use thy liberty of *judging* concerning the doctrines and duties of religion ; but deny not the same liberty to those who have an equal claim to it with thyself. A *consistent Protestant* is a character of the first order—admired by men, applauded by angels, and accepted of God ! *

But though we are thus enjoined to exercise our reason in matters of religion, yet, concerning the communications of *revelation itself*, we should be exceedingly careful lest we form a rash and precipitate judgment. Upon this hallowed ground, infidels have trodden with an incautious step, and suffered their liberty to degenerate into licentiousness. *Knowing but in part, and seeing through a glass darkly*, we are by no means competent judges of what is the *best* method to be used by the Supreme Being, in order to bring his fallen creatures to repentance and salvation. Were *this* remark (however obvious) duly regarded, it would put an *end* to most of the cavils which are brought forward in the present day, to invalidate the credibility of the gospel. It would not *then* be esteemed so pertinent an enquiry, to ask why the Christian revelation was not sooner published ; as whether it be of divine origin, and

* See the ingenious and venerable Mr. Turner's (of Abingdon) publication, entitled, *A Compendium of Social Religion*. The conclusion of that judicious work, contains many excellent observations in favour of Candour and Unanimity.

calculated to promote genuine holiness ? It would not be accounted so much our business to puzzle ourselves and to perplex others, by enquiring why it is not made universal, as to examine diligently what it requires, and what encouragements are afforded to steadfast obedience ? It would not be asked with the same *impatient* expectation of being fully satisfied, why the resurrection of Christ was not in this or in that particular manner manifested to such and such particular persons, as whether he be *indeed risen*, and did actually appear to faithful and competent witnesses ? Persons acquainted with only the first elements of religion, must perceive that in *these latter* enquiries, the *truth* of revelation is most nearly concerned. Questions respecting its origin, nature, and tendency, have been satisfactorily solved ; whilst *full* answers to enquiries more curious than important, may lie concealed in the profound abyss of that providence whose *paths are in the deep waters*, and whose *ways are past finding out* ! If it be indeed an *indisputable fact*, that *Jesus was crucified*, and *rose again according to the scriptures*, then is it altogether unreasonable to suppose that his doctrines are not true—that his precepts are of no authority—that his promises shall not be fulfilled, and that his threatenings shall not be executed—especially when it is also considered that these constituent parts of the gospel are designed, and adapted, to make us *partakers of the divine nature*,

and inheritors of eternal life. Even Bolingbroke * himself, one of its keenest and most insidious opponents, has confessed, that “ No religion ever yet appeared in the world, of which the *natural* tendency was so much directed to promote the *peace and happiness* of mankind, as the *Christian*; and that the gospel of Christ is one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, benevolence, and *universal charity*.”

Let therefore the pure knowledge which we profess to derive from the scriptures, that repository of divine truth, be accompanied with an ardent piety towards God, and with an extensive charity for our brethren. Thus shall we understand the nature, discern the excellence, and feel the energy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To *live down* error and vice, is the most sure mode of destroying them; and this, happily, every believer has the power of accomplishing. The noxious weeds of atheism and of infidelity would have never risen to their present alarming height, had not the soil in which they shoot up, been manured by the vices of professed Christians. By *living soberly, righteously, and godly, we hold forth, as from an eminence, the word of life, and others, seeing our good works, are led to glorify our Father who is in heaven*. And why should we be discouraged with the difficulties by which our understandings are embarrassed in this *preliminary* state of existence?

* See the article *Religion*—*Encyclopædia Britannica*.

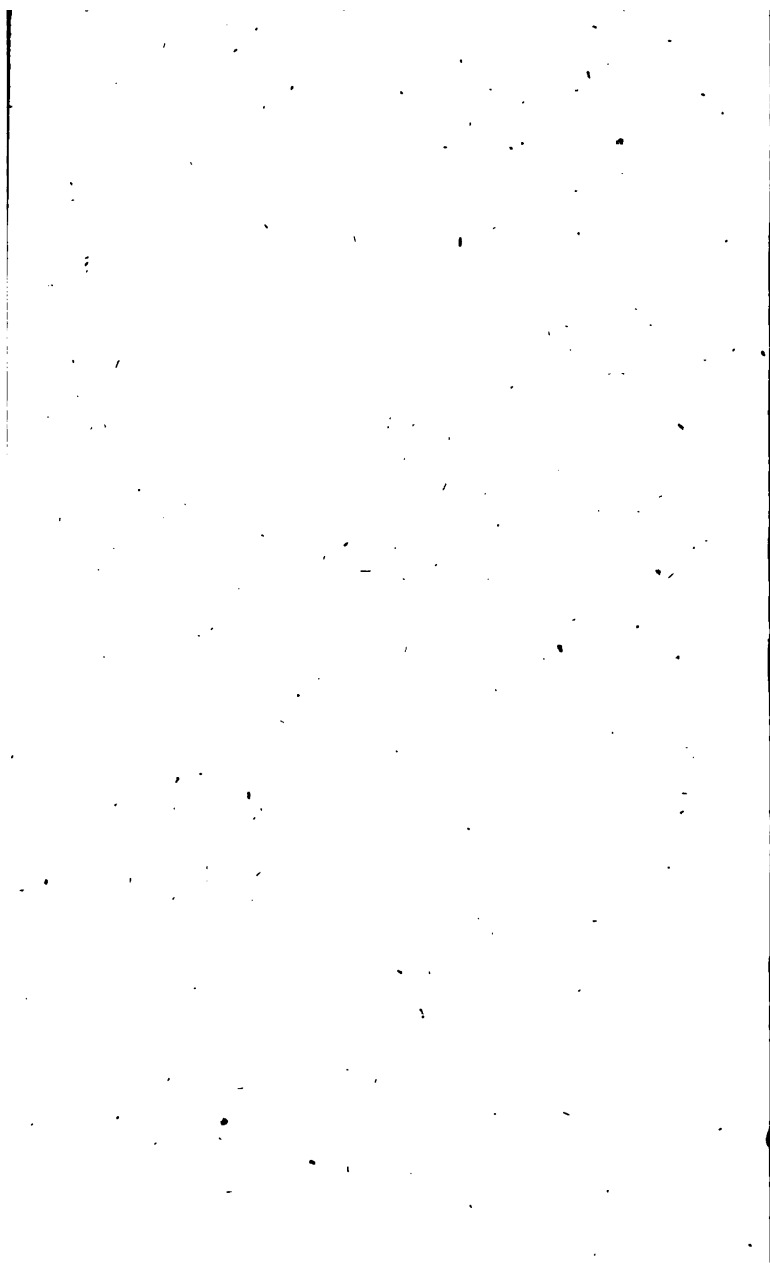
When *this mortal puts on immortality*, and *this corruptible incorruption*, then shall the powers of our souls be invigorated, and the objects of contemplation be encircled with that superior degree of light which ensures the firmest conviction. Faith shall have terminated in vision. Hope shall have been converted into enjoyment. JESUS, who hath *brought life and immortality to light*, shall have drawn aside the veil which now covers the works and the ways of God, and the full radiance of eternal day will beam on our enlightened souls !

Is this the *bigot's rant*?—Away, ye vain,
Your hopes, your fears, in doubt, in dulness steep ;
Go—sooth your souls in sickness, grief, or pain,
With the sad solace of—*eternal sleep*.

Yet know, ye sceptics, know—the *Almighty mind*
Who breath'd on *man* a portion of his fire,
Bade his *free soul*, by earth, nor time confin'd,
To *heaven*—to *immortality* aspire !

Nor shall the *pile of hope*, his *mercy* rear'd,
By *vain philosophy* be e'er destroy'd ;
ETERNITY !! by all, or wish'd or fear'd,
Shall be by ALL—or *suffer'd* or *enjoy'd*."

MASON.



A
PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST
INFIDELITY & UNCHARITABLENESS.

Honest and reasonable Christians would be of the *same* religion, if they were thoroughly understood by one another—if they did but talk enough together every day, and had nothing to do together but to serve God, and live in peace with their neighbour.

POPE'S LETTERS TO BISHOP ATTERBURY.

PART I.
TESTIMONIES
IN BEHALF OF CANDOUR & UNANIMITY.
BY MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D.D.
BISHOP OF WORCESTER*.

WERE this an age wherein any thing might be wondered at, it would be matter of deserved admiration, that we are still so far from being cemented together *in the unity of the spirit*

* The above extract I have made the *introductory* testimony; because it best expresses the design of the subsequent quotations, which are chronologically arranged. This is my reason for placing Stillingfleet at the head of them, though he did not die till the year 1699.

and the bond of peace. Must the fire of our uncharitable animosities be like that of the temple, which was *never* to be extinguished? However, I am sure it is such an one as was never kindled from Heaven, nor blown up with any breathings of the holy and divine Spirit.

May we be happily delivered from the plague of our divisions and animosities! Than which there hath been no greater scandal to the *Jews*, nor opprobrium of our religion among *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, nor more common objection among the *Papists*, nor any thing which hath been more made a pretence even for **ATHEISM** and **INFIDELITY**. For our controversies about religion have brought, at last, even religion itself into a controversy among such whose weaker judgments have not been able to discern where the plain and unquestionable way to heaven hath lain, in so great a mist as our disputes have raised among us. Weaker heads, when they once see the battlements shake, are apt to suspect that the foundation itself is not firm enough; and to conclude, if *any thing* be called in question, that there is *nothing* certain.

Religion hath been so much rarified into airy notions and speculations, by the distempered heat of men's spirits, that its inward strength, and the vitals of it, have been much abated and consumed by it. Men, being very loth to put themselves to the trouble of a holy life, are very ready to em-

brace any thing which may but dispense with that; and, if but lifting themselves under such a party may but shelter them, under a disguise of religion, none are more ready than such to be known by *distinguishing names*; none more zealous in the defence of every tittle and punctilio that lies most remote from those essential duties, wherein the kingdom of God consists—*righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

It will require both time and skill to purge out these noxious humours. I know of no prescription so likely to effect this happy end, as an infusion of *the true spirit* of religion; thereby to take men off from their eager pursuit after ways and parties, notions and opinions, and to bring them back to a right understanding of the *nature, design, and principles* of CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY is a religion which it is next to a miracle men should ever quarrel or fall out about, much less that it should be the occasion, or at least the pretence, of all that strife and bitterness of spirit, of all those contentions and animosities which are, at this day, in the Christian world. But our only comfort is, that, whatever our spirits are, *our God is the God of peace, our Saviour is the Prince of peace; and that wisdom which this religion teacheth, is both pure and peaceable.* Christians were once known by the benignity and sweetness of their disposition—by the candour and ingenuity of their spirit—by their mutual

love, forbearance, and condescension towards one another. But either this is not the practice of Christianity, or it was never calculated for our meridian, wherein men's spirits are of too high an elevation. If pride and uncharitableness, if divisions and strifes, if wrath and envy, if animosities and contentions were but the marks of true Christians, *Diogenes* never need light his lamp at noon to find out such among us. But if a spirit of meekness, gentleness, and condescension, if a stooping to the weakness and infirmities of others, if a pursuit after peace, even when it flies from us, be the indispensable duties and characteristic notes of those who have more than the name of Christians, it may possibly prove a difficult inquest to find out such for the crowds of those who shelter themselves under that *glorious name*.

The very commands of our SAVIOUR shewed his *meekness*; his laws were *sweet* and *gentle* laws, not like Draco's, that were writ *in blood*, unless it were *his own blood* that gave them.

Preface to his Irenicum.

WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH, A. M.
CHANCELLOR OF SALISBURY, AND PREBEND OF BRIX-
WORTH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.—DIED 1644*.

THIS is most certain, that, to reduce Christians to unity of communion, there are but two ways that may be conceived probable; the one by taking away diversity of opinions, touching matters of religion; the other by shewing, that the diversity of opinions, which is among the several sects of Christians, ought to be no hindrance to

* Though CHILLINGWORTH was not one of the reformers, yet he was the first writer who ably and completely vindicated the reformation against the Papists in his immortal work—*The Religion of the Protestants a safe Way to Salvation*. The famous passage, which has been so often quoted with applause—*The Bible is the Religion of Protestants, &c.* would have been here introduced, had it not been already inserted under the article *Protestantism*, in “The Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World.” Protestant, as well as Popish Divines, charged this great and good man with pulling down old buildings in a better manner than he could raise new ones, only because he pulled down and confuted the infallibility of the church of Rome. To this curious objection Chillingworth made this memorable reply: “You impute to me,” (says he) “that the way I take is destructive only, and that I build nothing. Which first is not a fault, for *the Christian Religion* is not *now* to be built; but only I desire to have the rubbish and impertinent lumber taken off, which you have laid upon it, and which hides *the glorious simplicity* of it from those who otherwise would embrace it.”

their unity in communion. Now the *former* of these is not to be hoped for without a miracle. What then remains, but that the *other* way must be taken, and Christians must be taught to set a higher value upon those high points of faith and obedience, wherein they agree, than upon those of less moment, wherein they differ ; and understand, that agreement in those ought to be more effectual to join them in *one communion*, than their difference in other things of less moment to divide them.

Let all men believe the Scriptures, and them only, and endeavour to believe them in the true sense, and require no more of *others*, and they shall find this not only a better, but the *only* means to restore unity. And, if no more than this were required of any man to make him capable of *church communion*, then all men, so qualified, though they were different in opinion, yet, notwithstanding any such difference, must be, of necessity, one in communion.

The presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the *general* words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together ; this vain conceit, that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God ; this deifying our *own* interpretations, and enforcing them upon *others* ; this *restraining* of the word of God from that *latitude* and *generality*, and the understandings of men from that *liberty* wherein Christ and his

apostles left them, is, and hath been, the *only* fountain of all the *schisms* of the church, and that which makes them immortal. Take away these walls of separation, and all will quickly be *one*. Require of *Christians* only to believe in Christ, and to call no man master but him only; let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it; and let them, that in their *words* disclaim it, (as Protestants do) disclaim it likewise in their *actions*. In a word, restore Christians to their just and full *liberty* of captivating their understanding to *Scripture* only; and then, as rivers when they have a free passage run all to the ocean, so it may well be hoped, by God's blessing, that *universal liberty*, thus *moderated*, may quickly reduce Christendom to TRUTH and UNITY.

Life, and the Religion of Protestants.

JOSEPH HALL, D. D.

SUCCESSIVELY BISHOP OF EXETER AND OF NORWICH.—DIED 1656*.

I Cannot but second and commend that great Clerk, of Paris, who, when King Lewis of France, required him to write down the best word that ever he had learnt, called for a fair skin of

* Bishop Hall is universally allowed to have been a man of great wit and learning, and of as great meekness and piety. *His Treatise on Moderation*, whence the above

parchment, and, in the midst of it, wrote this one word, *Measure*, and sent it, sealed up, to the King. The King, opening the sheet, and finding no other inscription, thought himself mocked by his Philosopher, and, calling for him, expostulated the matter. But when it was shewed him, that all virtues, and all religious worthy actions, were regulated by this one word; and that, without this, virtue itself turned vicious, he rested well satisfied. And so he well might, for it was a word well worthy of one of the seven sages of Greece, from whom indeed it was borrowed, and put into a new coat. For while he said, of old, for his motto, *nothing too much*, he meant no other but to comprehend both extremes under the mention of one; neither, in his sense, is it any paradox to say, that too little is too much; for, as too much bounty is prodigality, so too much sparing is niggardliness; so as, in every defect, there is an excess, and both are a transgression of measure. — Neither could aught be spoken of more use or excellency; for what goodness can there be in the world, without MODERATION, whether in the use of God's creatures, or in our own disposition and carriage? There is, therefore, nothing in the world more wholesome, or more

extract is taken, is exceedingly scarce. Indeed I have never met with more than *one* copy, which I found in the library of my worthy and much-esteemed friend, the Rev. Hugh Worthington.

necessary, for us to learn, than this gracious lesson of *Moderation*; without which, in very truth, a man is so far from being a Christian, that he is not himself. This is the center wherein all, both divine and moral philosophy, meet; the rule of life; the governess of manners; the silken string that runs through the pearl chain of all virtues; the very ecliptic line under which reason and religion move, without any deviation; and therefore most worthy our best thoughts—of our most careful observance. For, surely, if the want of moderation, in practice, do most distract every man in his own particular, the want of moderation, *in judgment*, distracts the whole world from itself; whence it is that we find so miserable divisions all the earth over, but especially so woe-ful schisms and breaches in the Christian world; wherein we see one nation thus divided from another, and each one nation no less divided from itself. For it cannot be, since every man hath a mind of his own, not less different from others than his face, that all should jump in the same opinion; neither can it stand with that natural self-love, wherewith every one is possessed, easily to forsake the child of his own brain, and to prefer another man's conceit to his own. Hereupon, therefore, it comes to pass, that while each man is engaged to that opinion, which either his own election, or his education, hath given him, new quarrels arise, and controversies are infinitely

multiplied, to the great prejudice of God's truth, and to the lamentable violation of the common peace. Would to God we could as well redress as bewail this misery, wherewith Christendom is universally infected !

When we hear and see fearful thundering, and lightning, and tempest, we are commonly wont to say, that *ill* spirits are abroad ; nor doubt I but that many times (as well as in Job's case) God permits them to raise these dreadful blusterings in the air ; right so, when we see these flashes, and hear these hideous noises of contention, in God's church, we have reason to think that there is an hand of Satan in their raising and continuance. For, as for God, we know his courses are otherwise. When it pleased him to make his presence known to Elijah ; first there passed a great and strong wind, which rent the mountains, and brake the rocks in pieces, but the Lord was not in the wind. After that wind came an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. But after the fire came a still small voice, and therein was the Almighty pleased to express himself. He that is the Sion of the tribe of Judah delights in the stile of the *Lamb* of God, and is so termed by John the Baptist, his forerunner, in the days of his flesh, and by John the Evangelist, his apostle, in the state of his glory. Neither was the Holy Spirit

pleased to appear in the form of a falcon, or eagle, or any other bird of prey, but of a dove, the meekness and innocence whereof our Saviour recommended for a pattern to all his followers. *Above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts.*

It was a worthy and just intimation that Saint Gregory Nazianzen gives, to this purpose, unto the Synod of Constantinople. What can be more absurd, saith he, than, while we decline the enemy's fight, to betake ourselves to mutual assaults of each other; and, by this means, to waste and weaken our own forces? Or what can be a greater pleasure to *adversaries* than to see us thus bickering with ourselves? But, if neither the respect to the glory of the God of peace, nor to the peace and welfare of the dear church and spouse of Christ, nor of themselves, can prevail any thing, what remains but to mourn, in silence, for the irreparable breaches of the sacred walls of Jerusalem; and, together with our zealous prayers for the opposed peace of Zion, to appeal to the justice of that holy and righteous Lord God of Israel, with

Increpa Domine bestias calami,

Rebuke, O Lord, the beasts of the reed, and scatter the people that delight in war. Amen.

Treatise on Christian Moderation.

THE EVER-MEMORABLE
 JOHN HALES, OF EATON,
 CANON OF WINDSOR.—DIED 1656*.

IT hath been the common disease of Christians, from the beginning, not to content themselves with that measure of faith which God, and the Scriptures, have expressly afforded us; but, out of a vain desire to know more than is revealed, they have attempted to discuss things, of which we can have no light, neither from reason nor revelation: neither have they rested here; but, upon pretence of church authority, which is none, or tradition, which, for the most part, is but figment, they have peremptorily concluded, and confidently imposed upon others, a necessity of entertaining conclusions of that nature; and, to strengthen themselves, have broken out into divisions and factions, opposing man to man, synod to synod, till the peace of the church vanished, without all possibility of recal. I do not yet see, that men of

* This eminent Divine, living in the troublesome times of Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell, suffered more than many martyrs have suffered. All writers and parties have agreed in giving him the character of one of the greatest, as well as best of men, that any age has produced. A few months before his death, he took an intimate friend into the Church Yard, near his house, and desired to be buried in a certain place, pointing to the spot, uttering, at the same time, these memorable words:—"I hope my death is not far off; for I am tired of this *uncharitable* world!"

different opinions in Christian religion may not hold communion, and both go to one church. Why may I not go, if occasion require, to an Arian church, so there be no Arianism expressed in their liturgy? And were liturgies, and public forms of service, so framed as that they admitted not of particular and private fancies, but contained only such things as in which all Christians do agree, schisms on opinion were utterly vanished. For, consider, of all the liturgies that are, or ever have been, and remove from them whatsoever is scandalous to any party, and leave nothing but what all agree on, and the event shall be, that the public service and honour of God shall no ways suffer; whereas, to load our public forms with the private fancies upon which we differ, is the most sovereign way to perpetuate schism unto the world's end. Prayer, confession, thanksgiving, reading of scriptures, exposition of scripture, administration of sacraments, in the plainest and simplest manner, were matter enough to furnish out a sufficient liturgy, though nothing, either of private opinion, or of church pomp, of garments, of prescribed gestures, of imagery, of music, of matter concerning the dead, of many superfluities which creep into the churches under the name of order and decency, did interpose itself. For to charge churches and liturgies with things unnecessary, was the first beginning of all superstition; and when scruples of conscience began

to be made, or pretended, then schisms began to break in. If the spiritual guides and fathers of the church would be a little sparing of incumbering churches with superfluities, and not over rigid, either in reviving obsolete customs, or imposing new, there were far less danger of schism or superstition; and all the inconvenience likely to ensue would be but this, they should, in so doing, yield a little to the imbecillities of inferiors; a thing which St. Paul would never have refused to do.

Look down, O Lord, upon thy poor dismembered church, rent and torn with discords, and even ready to sink. Why should the neutral, or Atheist, any longer confirm himself in his irreligion, by reasons drawn from our dissensions? Or why should any greedy-minded worldling prophecy unto himself the ruins of thy sanctuary, or hope one day to dip his foot in the blood of thy church? We will hope, O Lord, in thee (for what hinders?) that, notwithstanding all supposed impossibilities, thou wilt one day in mercy look down upon thy Sion, and grant a gracious interview of friends, so long divided. Thou that wroughtest that great reconciliation between God and man, is thine arm waxen shorter? Was it possible to reconcile God to man? To reconcile man to man is it impossible? Be with those, we beseech thee, to whom the prosecution of church controversies is committed; and, like a good

Lazarus, drop one cooling drop into their tongues and pens, too, too much exasperated against each other. And, if it be thy determinate will and counsel that this abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not, continue unto the end, accomplish thou, with speed, the number of thine elect, and hasten the coming of thy son, our Saviour, that he may himself, in person, sit and judge, and give an end to our controversies, since it stands not with any human possibility. Direct thy church, O Lord, in all her petitions for peace; teach her wherein her peace consists, and warn her from the world, and bring her home to thee; that all those that love thy peace may, at last, have the reward of the sons of peace, and reign with thee, in thy kingdom of peace, for ever.

Hale's Works.

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER, AND CANON OF
CHRIST-CHURCH, OXFORD.—DIED 1660*.

LORD! let no unreasonable stiffness of those who are in the right, no perverse obstinacy of those that are in the wrong, hinder the closing of our wounds; but let the one instruct in meek-

* This great man is principally known by his *Practical Catechism*, and his *Annotations on the New Testament*. He died at the very time when *Charles the Second* was about to raise him to the Bishoprick of Worcester.

ness, and be thou pleased to give to the other repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth. To this end do thou, O Lord, mollify all exasperated minds; take off all animosities and prejudices, contempt and heart-burnings; and, by uniting their hearts, prepare for the reconciling their opinions. And that nothing may intercept the clear sight of thy truth, Lord let all private and secular designs be totally laid aside, that gain may no longer be the measure of our godliness, but that the one great and common concernment of *truth and peace* may be unanimously and vigorously pursued. And do thou so guide and prosper all *pacific* endeavours, that those happy primitive days may, at length, revert, wherein VICE was the only heresy.

Hammond's Works.

JEREMY TAYLOR, D. D.

BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR.—DIED 1667*.

FEW men consider, that so long as men have such variety of principles, such several constitutions, educations, tempers, and distempers, hopes, interests, and weaknesses, degrees of light,

* The following high encomium was paid to the character of Bishop Taylor, by Dr. Ruft, who preached his funeral sermon: "He had the good-humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a chancellor, the sagacity of a prophet, the

and degrees of understanding, it is impossible all should be of one mind. And what is impossible to be done is not necessary to be done. And, therefore, although variety of opinions was impossible to be cured, and they who attempted it did like him who claps his shoulder to the ground to stop an earthquake; yet the inconveniences arising from it might possibly be cured; not by uniting their beliefs, that was to be despaired of; but by curing that which caused these mischiefs and accidental inconveniences of their disagreements. Since, then, if men are quiet and charitable, in some disagreements, then and there the inconvenience ceases; if they were so in all others, where lawfully they might (and they may in most) Christendom would be no longer rent in pieces, but would be re-instated in a new Pentecost. And, although the Spirit of God did rest upon us, in divided tongues, yet so long as those tongues were of fire not to kindle strife, but to warm our affections, and inflame our charities, we should find that this variety of opinions, in several persons,

“reason of an angel, and the piety of a saint. He had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for an university, and wit enough for a college of virtuosi; and had his parts and endowments been parcelled out among his clergy that he left behind him, it would, perhaps, have made one of the best dioceses in the world.” This panegyric on Bishop Taylor may be somewhat exaggerated; but I believe, among the Divines of the last age, he had few equals, and no superiors.

would be looked upon as an argument only of diversity of operations, while the spirit is the same; and that another man believes not so well as I, is only an argument, that I have a better and clearer illumination than he; that I have a better gift than he, received a special grace and favour, and excel him in this; and am, perhaps, excelled by him in many more. And, if we all impartially endeavour to find a truth, since this endeavour, and search only is in our power, that we shall find it to be a gift, and an assistance extrinſical. I can ſee no reaſon why this *pious* endeavour to find out truth ſhall not be of more force to unite us in *the bonds of charity*, than the miſery in miſſing it ſhall be to diſunite us. So that, ſince an union of perſuaſion is impoſſible to be attained, if we would attempt the cure, by ſuch remedies as are apt to enkindle and increaſe charity, I am confident we might ſee a bleſſed peace would be the reward and crown of ſuch endeavours.

But men are now a-days, and indeed always have been, ſince the expiration of the firſt bleſſed ages of Chriſtianity, ſo in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith, and all Chriſtendom, is concerned in their ſupport and maintenance; and whoever is not ſo fond, and does not dandle them, like themſelves, it grows up to a quarrel; which, becauſe it is in Divinity, is made a quarrel in religion, and God is entitled to it; and then, if you are once thought an enemy

to God; it is our duty to persecute you even to death; we do God good service in it. When, if we should examine the matter rightly, the question either is not revealed, or not so clearly, but that wise and honest men may be of different minds, or else it is not of the foundation of faith, but a remote superstructure, or else of mere speculation; or, perhaps, when all comes to all, it is a false opinion, or a matter of human interest, that we have so zealously contended for; for to one of these heads most of the disputes of Christendom may be reduced; so that I believe the present factions (for the most) are from the same cause which St. Paul observed in the Corinthian schism, *when there are divisions among you, are ye not carnal?* It is not the differing opinions that is the cause of the present ruptures, but want of charity; it is not the variety of understandings, but the disunion of wills and affections; it is not the several principles, but the several ends that cause our miseries; our opinions commence, and are upheld, according as our turns are served, and our interests are preserved; and there is no cure for us but *piety and charity*. A holy life will make our belief holy, if we consult not humanity, and its imperfections, in the choice of our religion; but search for truth without designs, save only of acquiring heaven, and then be as careful to preserve charity as we were to get a point of faith; I am much persuaded we shall find out more

truths, by this means; or, however (which is the main of all) we shall be secured, though we miss them, and then we are well enough.

I end with a story, which I find in the Jews books: "When Abraham sat at his tent door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, he espied an old man, stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age and travail, coming towards him, who was an hundred years of age. He received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, caused him to sit down; but observing that the old man eat, and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing on his meat, he asked him why he did not worship the God of heaven. The old man told him, that he worshipped the fire only, and acknowledged no other God. At which answer Abraham grew so zealously angry, that he thrust the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night, and an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone, God called to Abraham, and asked him where the stranger was? He replied, I thrust him away, because he did not worship thee. God answered him, I have suffered him these hundred years, although he dishonoured me; and couldst not thou endure him one night, when he gave thee no trouble? Upon this, saith the story, Abraham fetched him back again, and gave him hospitable entertainment,

“and wise instruction.” Go thou, and do likewise, and thy charity shall be rewarded by the God of Abraham.

Liberty of Prophefying.

JOHN WILKINS, D. D.

BISHOP OF CHESTER.—DIED 1672.

THERE are several *truths* which are not of so great consequence as *peace*, and *unity*, and *charity*. And therefore, in such things, there ought to be a mutual forbearance towards one another; and men should endeavour, by all means of amity and kindness, to join together for the promoting of those more substantial truths and duties wherein they agree, according to that rule of the apostle: *And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you: nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same thing.* To shut up all in a word; it would exceedingly conduce to our common peace and settlement, in times of differences and controversy, if those rules of Christianity, so often inculcated in scripture, were more regarded and observed amongst the professors of it; that men would *be wise unto sobriety*, and *not above what is written*. Not thinking more highly of themselves, and their abilities, than they ought, but *be ready to condescend to men of lower parts*, and to demean

ourselves towards every one, according to the *different measure of gifts* which God hath been pleased to dispense to them, *speaking the truth in love*. Endeavouring to heal differences in the most placid, gentle manner, without *envyings, strifes, backbitings, whisperings*. *Doing nothing through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, every one esteeming others better than himself*. They that exceed others in knowledge should exceed them likewise in the study of peace. The best of us do *know but in part, darkly*; that time is to come when all these differences shall be cleared up, and we shall have a full vision of the true state of things. In the mean space it concerns us to *forbear one another*, in those lesser things about which we differ; and to be very zealous about those great matters in which we agree; namely, *righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*.

Sermons.

ISAAC BARROW, D. D.

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DIED 1677.

THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; this is the first and great commandment, —The second is like unto it; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This is, indeed, the highest

commendation whereof any law is capable ; for as to be like God is the highest praise that can be given to a person, so to resemble the divinest law of love to God, is the fairest character that can be assigned of a law ; the which, indeed, representeth it to be as St. James calls it, a royal and sovereign law, exalted above all others, and bearing a sway on them. St. Paul telleth us, that *the end of the commandment* (or the main scope of the evangelical doctrine) is charity out of a *pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned* ; that charity is the *sum* and substance of all other duties, and that *he that loveth another hath fulfilled the whole law* ; that charity is the chief of the theological virtues, and *the prime fruit of the divine spirit, and the bond of perfection*, which combineth and consumeth all other graces, and the general principle of all our doings. St. Peter enjoineth us, that to all other virtues we add *charity* as the top and cream of them ; and *above all things* (says he) *have fervent charity among yourselves*. St. John calleth this law, by way of excellence, *the commandment of God* ; and our Lord himself, claimeth it as his peculiar precept. *This* (saith he) *is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another* ; and maketh the observance of it the special cognizance of his followers : *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*. These, indeed, are lofty

commendations thereof, yet all of them may worthily yield to this ; all of them seem verified in virtue of this, because God hath vouchsafed to place this command in so near adjacency to the first great law, conjoining the two tables, making *charity* contiguous, and, as it were, commensurate to *piety*.

It is true, that in many respects charity doth resemble piety, for it is the most genuine daughter of piety ; thence in complexion, in features, in humour, much favouring its sweet mother. It doth consist in like dispositions and motions of soul. It doth grow from the same roots and principles of benignity, ingenuity, equity, gratitude, planted in our original constitution by the breath of God, and improved in our hearts by the *divine spirit of love*. It produceth the like fruits of beneficence towards others, and of comfort in ourselves. It, in like manner, doth assimilate us to God, rendering us conformable to his nature, followers of his practice, and partakers of his felicity. It is of like use and consequence towards the regulation of our practice, and due management of our whole life. In such respects, I say, this law is like to the other, but it is, however, chiefly so, for that God hath pleased to lay so great stress thereon, as to make it the other half of our religion and duty ; or because, as St. John saith, *this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also* ; which is

to his praise, a most pregnant demonstration of his immense goodness to us.

The best, most excellent, and most happy of beings delights to be styled, and accordingly to express himself, *the God of love, mercy, and peace*; and his *blest Son* to be called *the Prince of Peace*; and who is also said, *from on high to have visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the ways of peace.*

Sermons.

ROBERT LEIGHTON, D. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF GLASGOW.—DIED 1684.

GRACE unto you; and peace be multiplied.

We may and ought to wish to the church of God outward blessings, and particularly outward peace, as one of the greatest, so one of the most valuable favours of God. Thus prayed the Psalmist—*peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces!* But that wisdom that doth what he will, by what means he will, and works one contrariety out of another, brings light out of darkness, good out of evil, can and doth turn tears and troubles to the advantage of his church; but certainly in itself, peace is more suitable to its increase, and, if not abused, proves so too. As in the apostolic time it is said, *the*

church had peace, and encreased exceedingly; we ought also to wish for ecclesiastical peace to the church, that she may be free from dissensions and divisions.

These readily arise, more or less (as we see in all times) and haunt religion, and the reformation of it, as an evil genius. St. Paul had this to say to his Corinthians, though he had given them this testimony, that they were enriched in all utterance and knowledge, and were wanting in no gift; yet presently after, *I hear that there are divisions and contentions amongst you. The enemy had done this*, as our Saviour speaks; and this enemy is no fool, for by divine permission he works to his own end very wisely: for there is not one thing that doth on all hands choak the seed of religion so much, as thorny debates and differences about itself. So in succeeding ages, and at the breaking forth of the light in Germany, in Luther's time, multitudes of sects arose.

Profane men do not only stumble, but fall and break their necks upon these divisions; we see (think they, and some of them possibly say it out) that they who mind religion most cannot agree upon it; our easiest way is not to embroil ourselves, nor at all to be troubled with the business. Many are of *Gallio's* temper, they *will care for none of these things*. Thus these offences prove a mischief to the profane world, as our Saviour says, *Woe to the world because of offences*.

The wisest and godliest find (and such are sensible of it) that disputes in religion are no friends to that which is far sweeter in it, but hinder and abate these pious and devout thoughts that are both the more useful and truly delightful. As peace is a choice blessing, so this is the choicest peace, and is the peculiar inseparable effect of this grace, with which it is jointly wished, *grace* and *peace*.—The flower of peace growing upon the root of grace.

But, brethren, receiving of the same spirit from their head, Christ, are most strongly bent to the good one of another. If there be but a thorn in the foot, the back boweth, the head stoopeth down, the eyes look, the hands reach to it, and endeavour its help and ease. In a word, all the members partake of the good and evil, one of another. Now, by how much this body is more spiritual and lively, so much the stronger must be the union and love of the parts of it to each other. You are brethren by the same new birth, and born to the same inheritance; and such an one shall not be an apple of strife amongst you to beget debates and contentions. No, it is enough for all, and none shall *prejudge another*; but you shall have joy in the happiness one of another, seeing you shall then be perfect in love, all harmony, no difference in judgment or affection, all your harps tuned to the same new song which you

shall sing for ever. Let that love begin here which shall never end.

Commentary on Peter.

EZEKIEL HOPKINS, D. D.

BISHOP OF LONDONDERRY.—DIED 1690.

IF thou wouldst keep thyself from being a slanderer of others, addict not thyself violently to any one party or persuasion of men. For part-taking will beget prejudice, and prejudice is the jaundice of the soul, which represents other men, and their actions, in the colour which our own disease puts upon them. And, indeed, we have all, generally, such a good conceit of ourselves, that it is a very hard and difficult matter to have a good esteem for others, who are not of our judgment and of our way. And this makes us first very willing to hear some evil of them: for, because we think that what we do is good, we cannot, cordially, think them good who do not judge and act as we ourselves do; and so our minds are prepared to entertain reports against them from others, and then to spread them abroad ourselves. And I cannot but impute to this the great *uncharitableness* of our days, wherein love, and brotherly kindness, lie *murdered* under the violence of different persuasions and different

modes, and divers ways of worshipping one and the same God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence all those lying rumours and lying wonders, that one party invents to beat down the other. One party reports the other to be all profane and superstitious; and the other reports its opposite to be all hypocritical and seditious, and both suffer from each other's envenomed tongues; and, between both, *truth* suffers, and *charity* perisheth, and is utterly lost. For shame, O Christians! is this the way to promote God's cause, or Christ's kingdom? Doth *he* or *it* stand in need of your lies? Will you speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Shall his honour be maintained by the devil's inventions? I shall not speak partially, but wheresoever the fault lies, there let this censure fall,—that it is, certainly, a very strong presumption of a very weak and bad cause, when the refuge and support of it are lies.

Now, notwithstanding that this sin of slander and detraction is so great and heinous, yet may it not be justly feared, that many place their whole religion in it, and think themselves so much the better, by how much the worse they think and report of other men? Do they not think it a piece of zeal, and warmth for the worship and service of God, to cry down all as superstitious that do not worship him in their way? Do they not make it, if not a part, yet a

sign of holiness, to be still finding faults, and crying out against others, to be censorious and clamorous? Such a sort of men are all lewd and profane; and such a sort are all rebellious and hypocrites: and then, to justify their censures, instance, possibly, in two or three, of whom, perhaps, they know no more than the bare names. And what tends all this to but mutual exasperation? Those who do not believe them, are exasperated against the reporters; and those who do believe them, are exasperated against the slandered: and as it tends to exasperation, so, likewise, it encourageth and hardeneth many in their sins; for when they hear so much evil blazed abroad in the world, and few or none escape without having some foul blot rubbed upon him, and infamous crime reported of him, whether truly or falsely, they think that sin and wickedness is no such strange thing; and so embolden themselves to commit that which they hear is so common.

I beseech you, therefore, O Christians, ! for the peace of the church, which else will continue sadly rent and divided; for the sake of Christianity, which else will be discredited and reviled; for your brethren's sake, who else will be discouraged or exasperated: be very cautious what reports you either receive or make of others. Their good name is very precious; precious to God, when their blameless conversation deserves it;

and precious to themselves. Howsoever, unless there be absolute necessity, and you be constrained to do it for the glory of God and the good of others, divulge not their imperfections, though they be real; and in no case whatsoever, feign or devise false rumours concerning them. *Take heed, lest if ye bite and devour one another, ye be not consumed one of another, and one with another.*

Exposition of the Commandments.

JOHN TILLOTSON, D. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—DIED 1694.

GOD hath given us *understanding* to try and examine things, and *the light of his word* to direct us in this trial; and if we will judge rashly, and suffer ourselves to be hurried by prejudice or passion, the *errors of our judgment* become the *faults of our lives*. For God expects from us, that we should weigh and consider what we do; and when he hath afforded us light enough to discern betwixt good and evil, that we should carefully follow the direction of it; that we should be suspicious of ourselves, when our zeal carries us to do things that are furious and cruel, false and treacherous, and have a horrid appearance even to the light of nature: we should question *that zeal* which is so contrary to Christian

goodness and meekness, to peace and charity, and which tends to *confusion, and every evil work.*

The corruption of the best things is the worst. Religion is, certainly, the highest accomplishment and perfection of human nature ; and zeal for God, and his truth, an excellent quality, and highly acceptable to God ; and yet nothing is more barbarous, and spurs men on to more horrid impieties, than a blind zeal for God, and false and mistaken principles in the matters of religion. Our Saviour compares the Christian religion, and the ministers and professors of it, to *salt* and *light*, the most useful and delightful things in the world ! Religion enlightens the minds of men, and directs them in the way wherein we should go ; it seasons the spirits and manners of men, and preserves them from being putrified and corrupted. Mistakes, and false principles, are no where so pernicious, and of such mischievous consequence, as in religion. A blind and misguided zeal in religion, is enough to spoil the best nature and disposition in the world. St. Paul (for aught appears) was of himself of a very kind and compassionate nature, and yet what a *fury* did his mistaken zeal make him ! It is hardly credible how madly he laid about him, but that he himself gives us the account of it. I might descend lower, and give instances both of former and latter times, of emperors and princes,

both heathen and Christian, that of themselves were mild and gentle, and yet, through a mistaken zeal, have been carried to cruel and bloody things. And, indeed, nothing gives so keen an edge, even to the mildest tempers, as an erroneous and wild zeal for God and religion, it is like quicksilver in the back of a sword, that is not very sharp of itself, which gives a mighty force and weight to its blow, and makes it to cut terribly. I conclude all with that gentle reproof of our blessed Saviour to his disciples, when their zeal for him had transported them to make that cruel request to him, that he would *call for fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans : Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* Hereby declaring the true spirit and temper of Christianity, and that they that act contrary to it, are ignorant of the nature of the Christian religion.

Sermons.

WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

DIED 1713.

THAT the *Christian religion* was immediately designed to improve and perfect the principles of human nature, appears, as from many other instances of it, so especially from this, that it so strictly enjoins, cherishes, and promotes that natural *kindness* and *compassion*, which is one of

the prime and essential inclinations of mankind. Wherever the gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious temper of mind, as makes us humble, affable, courteous, and charitable, ready and disposed to every *good work*, prompt to all offices of humanity and kindness ; it *files* off the ruggedness of men's natures, banishes a rude, churlish, and pharisaical temper, and infuses a more calm and treatable disposition. It commands us to *live and love as brethren, to love without hypocrisy, to have fervent charity among ourselves, and to be kindly affectioned one towards another*. It lays the sum of our duty towards others in this,—*to love our neighbours as ourselves*. This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar law, and has ratified it with his own solemn sanction. *A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another ; as I have loved you, that you also love one another*. And then makes this the great visible badge of all those who are truly Christians. *By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another*.

And so, indeed, it was with those first and best ages of religion ; for no sooner did the gospel fly abroad into the world, but the love and charity of Christians became notorious, even to a proverb ; the heathens taking notice of the Christians of those times, with this particular remark, *See how these Christians love one another !* They were then

united in the most happy *fraternity* (a word much used by *Christians* in those days, and objected against them by the *heathens*) they lived as brethren, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common parent, but upon much higher accounts, viz. that they had one and the same God for their father, drank all of the same spirit of holiness, were brought out of the same womb of darkness and ignorance, into the same light of truth; that they were partakers of the same faith, and co-heirs of the same hope. This Lucian himself confesses of them, and that it was one of the great principles that their master instilled into them, that they should all become *brethren* after they had thrown off the religion of the Gentiles, and had embraced the worship of their great *crucified* Master, and given up themselves to live according to his laws. The truth is, so ready, entire, and constant was their kindness and familiarity, that the heathens accused them of having private marks upon their bodies, whereby they fell in love with each other at first sight. Indeed they never met but they embraced one another, with all the demonstrations of a hearty and sincere affection, saluting each other with an holy kiss, not only in their own houses, but at their religious assemblies, as a badge and bond of that Christian fellowship and communion that was maintained amongst them.

Primitive Christianity.

GILBERT BURNET, D.D.

BISHOP OF SALISBURY.—DIED 1717.

WITH respect to *love* and *charity*, as our Saviour was the greatest pattern of doing good for evil, both in life and death, so he carried the precept higher than any religion ever did. *Love is the badge of Christianity*, and when once this holy religion spreads its influence into the soul, it not only becomes so inwardly mollified into that tenderness and compassion, as to make all such sincerely love those who are truly good, but it also begets in them great piety, and a merciful disposition, even towards enemies, or those who are in error; all cruelty, and sourness of temper, the great engines and instruments to support all false religions, is so softened and mitigated, that St. Paul, who was a fierce persecutor while he was a zealous Jew, became a wonderful instance of gentleness when *this Spirit of Christ* was formed in him; a *true Christian* is *peaceable, mild, and easy to be entreated*. Piety towards God, and holiness of life, are to be found in other religions, but an universal charity, and brotherly kindness, are *peculiar* to our most holy faith; so that, as far as any church, or sort of men, depart from the rules of truth and goodness, so far they fall from *the Spirit of Christ*, and bear the character of the *lapsed apostate spirit*, who was a *liar*,

and a murderer from the beginning. Hence may every one make a judgment of the spirit that moves and appears in the conduct of any church, whether it be a spirit of truth and goodness, or of falsehood and cruelty; the former is *the Spirit of Christ*, the latter must be *the spirit of the devil, and of antichrist.*

It is a clear evidence of a very ill religion, when men, by its influences, become really worse, and more fiercely brutal, than if they were not under the restraint and government of any religion at all. And what can be a more manifest proof of an ill religion than this? But I am sorry to find, that too many among us are also deeply tinctured with the same cruel spirit. It is true, this is a personal fault, for no part of our doctrine gives it any countenance or encouragement; on the contrary, to hate any man, to rejoice in executions, to insult or use ill any that are in misery, or to endeavour their ruin, because of their religion, are all such symptoms of a popish and persecuting spirit, that it is *our shame* not to leave these things entirely to them. We ought to pity the seduced or mistaken, and endeavour to reclaim them by reason, and the force of truth, by our gentleness and tenderness towards them: this is most agreeable to that just and merciful religion we profess.

There is only *one*, and that the *main* thing which we want; namely, the *true Spirit of Christ*,

to animate us in the practice of his religion, without which it is dead, even as the *body is dead without the soul* that quickens it. What can all notions and opinions, however true, all forms and customs, however harmless or useful they be, avail us, without such an internal sense of religion as subdues and reforms our natures, and governs us in the course of our lives. All the rest will signify nothing, but aggravate our condemnation; for that, having known our master's will, we have not done it. This, of all things, is most likely to provoke God to give us up; for, though God is long suffering, slow to wrath, and unwilling to deliver us up to those who are both his and our enemies, yet, if we continue still to provoke him by our wicked lives, all our *pretended zeal* for this holy religion will only tend to precipitate our ruin.

Sermon on Popery.

ROBERT LUCAS, D. D.

PREBENDARY of WESTMINSTER.—DIED 1715.

AS virtue is the perfection of human life, so is action the perfection of virtue, and *zeal* is that principle of action which I require in a saint of God. Need I here distinguish this zeal from the fierceness of faction, *the cruelty of superstition*, from the wakeful and indefatigable activity

of avarice and ambition, from the unruly heats of pride and passion, and from the implacable fury of revenge? It needs not; no foolish, false, fantastic, earthly, or devilish principle, can counterfeit a *divine zeal*. 'Tis a perfection that shines with such a peculiar lustre, with such an heavenly majesty and sweetness, that nothing else can imitate it; 'tis always *pursuing good, the honour of God, and the happiness of man*. It contends earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; but it contends, as earnestly too, to root out wickedness and implant the righteousness of the gospel in the world. It is not eager for the articles of a *sect* or *party*, and unconcerned for *catholic* ones. When it presses for reformation it begins *at home*, and sets a bright example of what it would recommend to others. 'Tis *meek* and *gentle* under its own affronts, but warm and bold against those which are offered to God. In a word, though *love* fill its sails, *divine wisdom* and *prudence* give it ballast; and it has no heat but what is tempered and refracted by *charity* and *humility*.

Need I fix or state the various degrees of zeal? Alas! it is not requisite; *zeal* being nothing else but an ardent thirst of promoting the divine glory by the *best works*. 'Tis plain the more excellent the *work*, and the more it cost, the more perfect, the more exalted the zeal that performs it. In a word, zeal is nothing else but the *love of*

God made *perfect* in us. And if we would see it drawn to the life, we must contemplate it in the blessed *JESUS*, who is the perfect pattern of heroic love. How boundless was his love, when the whole world, and how transcendent, when a world of enemies was the object of it ! How indefatigable was his zeal ! how wakeful ! how meek ! how humble ! how firm and resolved ! His labours and travels, his self-denial, prayers and tears ; his silence and patience ; his agony and blood, and charitable prayers, poured out with it for his persecutors, instruct us fully what divine love, what divine zeal is. And now, even at this time, *love* reigns in him as he reigns in heaven : *love* is still the predominant, the darling passion of his soul. Worthy art thou, O *Jesus*, to receive honour, and glory, and dominion ! Worthy art thou to sit down with thy Father on his throne ! Worthy art thou to judge the world, because thou hast loved, because thou hast been zealous unto death, because thou hast overcome ! Some there are, indeed, who have followed thy bright example, though at a great distance. First ; martyrs and confessors : next ; those beloved and admired princes who have governed their kingdom in righteousness ; to whom the honour of *God*, and the good of the world, have been far dearer than pleasure, than empire, than absolute power, or that ominous blaze that is now called glory. And next follow !—

hold ! this is the work of angels, they must marshal the field of glory in the end of all things. O my God, may I, at least, be one to fill the train of this triumphant procession in that blessed day, when thou shalt crown *the zeal and patience* of thy saints !

Enquiry after Happiness.

HUMPHREY PRIDEAUX, D. D.

DEAN OF NORWICH.—DIED 1724.

THE churches of the east, once the most flourishing, having drawn the abstrusest niceties into controversy, which were of little or no moment to that which is *the chief end* of our holy Christian religion, and divided and subdivided about them into endless schisms and contentions, did thereby destroy that *peace, love, and charity* from among them, which the *gospel* was given to promote ; and, instead thereof, they continually provoked each other to that malice, rancour, and evil work, that they lost the whole substance of their religion, while they thus eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it ; and, in a manner, drove Christianity quite out of the world, by those very controversies in which they disputed with each other about it. So that, at length, having wearied the patience and long-suffering of God, in thus turning his holy re-

ligion into a firebrand of hell for contention, strife, and violence among them, which was given them out of his infinite mercy, to *the quite contrary end*, for the salvation of their souls, by *living holily, righteously, and justly, in this present world*: he raised up the *Saracens* to be the instruments of his wrath to punish them for it.

Life of Mahomet.

DANIEL WHITBY, D. D.

PREBENDARY OF SARUM.—DIED 1726.

OUR blessed Lord told his disciples, *that the time would come when they that killed them, should think they did perform the most high and acceptable act of worship to God.* And though this was then actually done by the hatred which the unbelieving *Jews* bore against all Christians, yet it has been more fully, and tragically completed, by the decisions, decrees, and practices of the court and church of Rome. These decrees and practices of the church of Rome, are highly opposite to the true spirit of Christianity, to the laws of Christ, to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church; and, consequently, the church which makes these sanguinary decrees, and perpetrates these inhuman butcheries, must be a false church, and guilty of the blood of myriads of Christ's disciples. And if this barbarous

treatment of pretended heretics be evidently repugnant to the true spirit of Christianity, and contrary to the example of our Saviour, which we are bound to imitate, if it is entirely opposite to the principles and practices of the primitive and purest ages of the church ; this will be, I hope, sufficient to convince wise men, that the religion which commands these cruelties and inhumanities, cannot derive itself from him who is *the God of love, and patience, and mercy, and pity, to the sons of men.*

All the church of Rome can plead to justify her practice in burning, massacring, and extirpating of heretics and schismatics, might, with much greater advantage, have been urged against the *Samaritans*. Doth not she practise her severities out of zeal for truth, and for the honour of God and Christ, and of the true religion, in reclaiming heretics and schismatics, and to prevent or terrify others from adhering to or being deluded by them ? But how contrary is this to our Saviour's conduct, who, when the disciples upon all these accounts, had much greater cause to call for fire from heaven on these *Samaritans*, did yet rebuke them, and would not suffer it to be done, not even to one small village ? How then will he condemn the actual execution of such severities to many thousand innocent Christians, after his solemn declarations, that all such cruel proceedings are directly contrary to the de-

sign of his most blessed coming upon earth, and to the spirit of his Gospel ?

For the true reasons of Christ's rebuking his disciples for their desiring leave to act thus feverely with these schismatical and heretical *Samaritans*, were, first, because this spirit of severity, wherever found, is entirely opposite to the calm temper of Christianity. This appears by our Saviour's reply to his disciples—*ye know not what spirit ye are of* ; that is, you do not consider under what kind of dispensation ye are placed by me. The temper, disposition, and affection, which I come to teach men, and would fix within them, is not a furious, persecuting, and destructive spirit, but such as is mild, gentle, and tender of the lives and interests of men, even of our greatest enemies. Under the Old Testament; if a prophet was rejected and scoffed at, he had power to punish it severely. But they, who reject and crucify Christ, are prayed for by him, and are, by his command, to be preached to, and, if possible, to be brought to repentance ; and all Christians are to conform themselves to this example towards the contemners of their persons, or rejecters of their doctrines ; not according to the legal, but the evangelical dispensation—the meekness and gentleness of Christ. The gospel dispensation requires universal love, meekness, peace, and good-will to all men, even to our enemies ; and no difference of religion, no pre-

tence of zeal for God, can justify this fierce, cruel, and inhuman zeal. Another reason of our Saviour's, against those wicked doctrines and practices, is, *that he came not into the world to destroy men's temporal lives, but to save them.* He came to discountenance all rage, violence, and cruelty in men, one towards another ; to restrain and subdue that furious unpeaceable spirit which so disquiets the world, and occasions so many mischiefs and disorders in it ; that the lamb and wolf may lie down together ; without hunting or destroying one another ; and engaging all men to lay aside all bitterness and wrath, anger and clamour, malice, and evil speaking. He came to introduce that excellent religion, which consults not only the eternal salvation of men's souls, but also their temporal peace and security ; their comfort and happiness in this world, *condemning all bitter zeal as earthly, sensual, and devilish.* Not dispatching them out of the way, but with *long suffering*, expecting if God peradventure will give them *repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth* ; which teacheth us *to bear with the weak in faith, and be long suffering to all men, and to restore them in the spirit of meekness.*

Sermon on Persecution.

SAMUEL CLARK, D. D.

RECTOR OF ST. JAMES'S, WESTMINSTER.

DIED 1729.

ZEAL cannot be a Christian virtue, unless employed in searching after truth, and the practice of right, which is its true and proper object; nor is this sufficient; for, though zeal cannot possibly be excessive in its degree, if fixed on a good object, yet, if care be not taken, it may easily degenerate into a false and unchristian zeal; wrath and fierceness, contentiousness and animosity, violence and hatred, are vicious and ungodly practices, whether the object of a man's zeal be good or bad. St. Paul was not only faulty for persecuting the Christians, when himself a *Jew*, but he would have continued equally so, had he persecuted the *Jews* when he became a Christian. When the disciples would have called for fire from heaven upon the Samaritans, our Saviour rebuked them, saying, *Ye know not what spirit ye are of.* And St. Paul directs, that *the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves.* And he advises all Christians to let their MODERATION be known unto all men. Such moderation was not to consist in a lukewarmness or indifferency for religion, or for the great and weightier mat-

ters of the law ; but St. Paul, by *moderation*, means that meekness, calmness, and equitable spirit which well agrees with, and usually accompanies, the highest possible zeal for truth and virtue. Nothing makes zeal properly a Christian virtue, but when the end or intention to which it is ultimately directed does tend to, and is for the honour and glory of God. I mean not, by God's honour and glory, any thing imaginary or enthusiastic, which often turns religious zeal into the worst and most pernicious vices, but only the establishment of God's kingdom of righteousness, here, in truth, and peace, and charity, in order to the salvation of men's souls hereafter, in his eternal kingdom of glory ; and, if *we remember the end, we shall never do amiss*.

There is no opinion so absurd, but men may be brought to believe and embrace it ; no crime so black, but they may confidently engage in it, and yet still think themselves in the right ; and the reason for this evidently is, that such people, when they consider, begin at the wrong end. For, instead of coming to their rule, with minds open and unbiassed, and free to entertain truth, when discovered, they, on the contrary, bring their own notions and impressions along with them, and resolve to admit of nothing for just and true, but what agrees with their own principles. Hence they stretch and bend the rule, to bring it to their own crooked affections and designs.

Hence we see holy missionaries divide, that they may devour; and, from the ignorance and credulity of the people, take advantages of kindling such a furious zeal as sets whole kingdoms in a flame; as blows the coals till all the soft relentings of human nature are consumed, and makes their profelytes ten times more the children of hell, by a false hope of ensuring heaven to themselves. Instead of correcting the extravagancies of cruelty and injustice, by Christian considerations of mutual forbearance and meek suffering, they render their instruments more turbulent, barbarous, and cruel, upon the pretence of serving a church, or a cause. Deliver us, good God, from such dangerous delusions, and let us not fall into the hands of such men as think they do thee service by our destruction. For when blood is esteemed a sacrifice, and persecution commences a principle, compassion thenceforth becomes a crime; and the tenderest mercies of a zeal, thus inflamed, will be sure to prove the very extremity of cruelty.

But let not this disorderly zeal of our bitterest enemies, or the most dreadful consequences of it, extinguish our charity for such mistaken men; no, let us *blefs them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us*. We must not let our fear, or resentment, transport us to the like extravagance which we condemn in others. But invite the mistaken over to our persuasion by that Christian meekness and gentle-

ness of temper, which may assert the credit of religion, and prove that *God is in us of a truth.*

Sermon on Zeal.

WILLIAM WAKE, D. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—DIED 1737.

AS to charity, God forbid that any differences in religion whatsoever, much less things of smaller concern, should ever make us uncharitable to our fellow Christians. Indeed our Saviour foretold to his disciples, that there should some rise up from among their brethren who would, on this account, not only *put them out of their synagogues*, but even think it religious *to kill them*. But they were Jews, not Christians, who were to do this; and, to the scandal of our holy religion, we must acknowledge that there are a sort of men, who now call themselves Christians, who still continue, even literally, to fulfil this prophecy; who not only cast us out of their synagogues, but, as far as they can, deprive us of all hopes of salvation. But this, and many other of their errors, may serve to convince us how little they have of *the true spirit of Christianity*. But I hope there needs no argument to persuade you to observe that charity, the want of which we all of us so justly lament, as one of the most deplorable corruptions in popery itself. If Chris-

tianity commands us to love our enemies, it must be highly reasonable for us not to hate our brethren; and, indeed, whatever arguments we can use to justify our uncharitableness to others, will equally excuse them in withholding their charity from us. For there is no honest, sincere Christian, how erroneous soever, but what thinks himself in the right, and supposes us, by differing from him, to be as far from the truth as we do him for not agreeing with us. And if it be lawful for us to hate another, solely on account of such differences, we must allow it to be equally as reasonable for him to hate us. The Saviour says, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* But we shall act directly contrary to this, if we make our hatred to our brother the great mark of our zeal for religion, and believe he loves Christ the most who the least loves his fellow Christians. We should rather, with the apostle, consider the love of our dear master to us, even whilst we were enemies, and love those who, notwithstanding their errors, may be still his and our friends; and not think those unworthy of our charity whom, we piously presume, God will not think unworthy of his favour. For, supposing they should be mistaken, yet we ourselves are but men, and may also err, and they as much think us in the wrong as we do them; and, perhaps, it must be left to the day of judgment to determine who is in the

right. But should they be mistaken, yet I am sure our *uncharitableness* is not the way to convince them of their error, but quite the reverse. If, then, we are what we esteem ourselves to be, the *strong in faith*, let us remember, that, though charity be their duty, as well as ours, yet it is to such as we are that St. Paul exhorts *to bear the infirmities of the weak, and to receive one another, as Christ also hath received us, to the glory of God.*

Hitherto we have defended our church by arguments; let us now, by our *charity*, settle and establish it. This will recommend both ourselves and our religion, to the good esteem of all men, and may be a happy presage, that the blessed time spoken of in the sacred prophecy is now ready to be revealed; when the church of Christ, being purged from those corruptions that have so long defaced its beauty, shall again appear in its primitive purity. When all heresy and schism, being every where abolished, and the mystery of iniquity laid fully open, and the man of sin destroyed, true religion and sincere piety shall again reign throughout the world. O blessed state of the church militant here on earth! The glorious antepast of that peace and piety which God has prepared for his church triumphant in heaven! Who would not wish to see those days, when a general reformation, a true zeal, and a perfect charity, shall universally prevail, and that we may be all

united in the same faith and worship, the same communion and fellowship, one with another? When all pride and prejudice, all interests and designs, being submitted to the honour of God, and the discharge of our duty, *the holy scriptures* shall again triumph over the traditions of men; and religion no longer take its denomination from little sects and factions, but we shall be content with the same common primitive names of *Christians* and *brethren*, and live together as becomes our character, in brotherly love and Christian charity with one another. And who can tell but such a change as this is nigh at hand; and which may be soon accomplished, would we all but seriously labour to perfect the great work which the providence of God has so gloriously begun, and establish that unity among us, which may afterwards diffuse itself into distant parts of the Christian world. And, though we may not be so happy as to *see* any such blessed effect on our endeavours, yet this we are sure of, that we shall not lose our reward in heaven; when to have contributed, though in the least degree, to the healing those divisions we so unhappily labour under, will be esteemed a greater honour than to have silenced all the cavils of our enemies, and be rewarded with blessings *more than all the stars in the firmament for number*.

Exhortation to Mutual Charity.

DANIEL WATERLAND, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF MIDDLESEX.—DIED 1740.

AS to religious differences, they are generally the fiercest, and last the longest, and are of fatal consequence to peace and happiness; therefore certainly ought, as much as in us lies, to be prevented or composed by us. What concerns us, as private men, is so to defend our religion, and to maintain the true faith and worship, by discourse or writing, as not to lose our charity. Religion is a cause that deserves our zeal; and if many will be offended with us for telling them the truth, and not complying with such errors as would lead both to their and our destruction, the fault is their own; we should still, as much as lieth in us, *live peaceably* with them. Not by betraying the cause of Christ; not by ceasing to *contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*; not by pleading for amendments and alterations in the purest and best constituted church of any in the world; but by condescending to hearken to, and answer, any modest scruples, by meekness and gentleness, by patience and forbearance, *not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrawise, blessing*. This is, as much as in us lies, as private persons, towards living peaceably with them that dissent from us. Some thing more lies in them who have no

unlawful terms of communion imposed; and, therefore, might and should give up their prejudices, and submit to lawful authority, and wholesome order, for the church's peace. However, considering the prevailing bias which education, custom, and prejudice, lay upon weak minds, especially when they have neither leisure, nor capacity, to know better; and considering that mild and gentle usage may possibly win some over, whom reviling and rudeness would but harden and render worse, it is certainly a Christian duty not to upbraid and provoke them; not to be bitter against them, but rather to wait with patience till God may open their eyes, or turn their hearts; to whose mercy we should therefore leave them, and, in the mean while, take care of our own souls.

But another sort of differences, near as fatal as the former, and in some respects more so, are those among ourselves, of the same church and interest, our *PARTY differences*. How have these fowered men's tempers, inflamed their passions, and almost eaten out the heart of Christian charity! I have not time, nor words, to lament the visible decay of religion and piety, owing to those heats and animosities so rife amongst us: the whole nation feels it, and every good man mourns in secret for it. We shall not, I am afraid, find that these eager contests are founded either in a true love of our own country in par-

ticular, or for mankind in general; or that our zeal arises from a real concern for truth, for justice, or for charity. While we are engaging, with such warmth and eagerness, about the affairs of this life, it might abate our fervor to consider how little time we have to sojourn here, and how great a work we have upon our hands; and of what moment it is to go cool and quiet hence, if ever we hope to find a place within the calm and peaceful mansions of the blessed.

Sermon on Peace.

JEREMIAH SEED, A. M.

DIED 1747.

FUNDAMENTALS, *abstractedly from persons,* as relating to the scheme of Christianity, may be fixed by a certain and determined standard, and they are plainly those that are so intimately interwoven with Christianity, that *it* and *they* must stand or fall together. But fundamentals, in a *relative view*, as respecting the salvation of particular persons, cannot be precisely defined and adjusted by any fixed and unchanging measure. They must vary according to the variety of men's apprehensions, circumstances, and opportunities. And it is impossible to settle those points, the belief of which shall be necessary to salvation, absolutely and universally, to all men, without any distinction, in all cases, under such an endless disparity

of capacities, means of instruction, and situation in life. Who can tell what determined proportion of faith (neither less nor more) will carry a man to heaven? That quantity of faith which may be insufficient in itself to make a man a complete Christian, may be sufficient for that man who, humanely speaking, has done the best he could in his circumstances.

You ought not to conceive a distaste for any man, or body of men, because they are of a different persuasion, sect, or party. Supposing yourself in the right; you pity *corporeal* blindness: Why should you not, likewise, compassionate, instead of being angry with the blindness of the *understanding*, when it cannot discern certain religious truths? I know no reason but this, which resolves itself into pride; that the *corporeally* blind *own* themselves to be *so*; but the blind in *understanding* maintain that *we* labour under that *distemper*, and not *they*. Now we are not so thoroughly convinced that our understanding and way of thinking is perfectly right in all points, as that we have the full enjoyment of our eyesight: and this makes us so angry with the one, while we pity the other. Ensure your own salvation as much as you can, but do not think hardly of those who differ from you, even in fundamental points, much less consign them over to damnation. Our blessed Saviour, who disapproved the worship of the *Samaritans*, as appears

from his conversation with the *Samaritan* woman at the well, yet singles out, in his beautiful parable, one of that nation to do a generous action to the wounded traveller, on purpose, one would think, to obviate this contracted turn of mind, and to recommend those to our love whose religious notions we dislike. Whether a good man, who is a misbeliever in some points, without any faultiness or irregularity of will, will be damned for his *erroneous* way of thinking, may be a question with some people; but I think it admits of none, that a man will be damned for an uncharitable way of thinking and acting.

Sermons.

JOHN BALGUY, D. D.

DIED.—1748.

WHATEVER be the meaning of it, we seem all to expect that others should think as we do, and subscribe to our principles and persuasions. And whenever this expectation fails, as it perpetually must, our affection is apt to cool, and our good will to abate, in proportion to the difference. Whoever judges in his own way and rejects ours, at least forfeits some share of our esteem, and often becomes an object of our high displeasure, if not deemed our enemy. Such an inhuman procedure:

being too general and common, it deserves to be a little considered. Let us then briefly enquire into the true cause of this proceeding; for unless that be discovered, it will be in vain to think of a cure.

To what principle, then, can we ascribe this? Is it owing to our love of truth and our zeal and concern for the support of it? No; for such a principle, if sincere, would make us behave quite the reverse. But admitting our opinions to be just and true, how are they to be maintained, promoted, and propagated? By ill-will or goodwill; by hatred or love; by injuries and reproaches, or kind usage and gentle treatment? Surely if we would recommend our opinions effectually, we must procure them a fair hearing, and appear well affected to those whom we would convince. But if we discover any signs of enmity and disaffection, men will be, naturally, prejudiced against all the arguments we can urge, because they may justly suspect that we are influenced by motives very different from what we pretend. Whoever then has a real regard for truth, and is desirous to promote its interest, will, doubtless, follow other methods than those we are speaking of. He will find it necessary to correspond with men of different persuasions fairly and friendly; and, in all his dealings, to proceed with humanity, equity, and candour. He will be so far from exasperating their minds by ma-

Jealousie or contempt, that he will strive to conciliate their good will, and cultivate their esteem, by a willing discharge of all such good offices as may reasonably be expected from him. So that a pretence of our love and zeal for truth, cannot justify the practice we have been condemning. But then may not a pious concern for the glory of God make men impatient of opposition, and zealous for their opinions, in order to preserve the doctrines of religion in their original purity? However plausibly this may be alledged, it cannot be easily proved true. Let the pure doctrines of religion, by all means, be guarded and maintained as carefully as may be; But how is this to be done? Will animosity or reproaches have a better effect than argument and fair reasoning? If we think our neighbour has erred and strayed from the paths of truth, must we fall out with and abuse him, in order to bring him back in the right way? Will our treating him angrily or scornfully, make him more attentive to instruction, or more open to conviction? Will he not rather be apt to conclude that our passions and dispositions are more faulty than his faith, or more irregular than his judgment? *As the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,* so it is the most improper instrument to maintain truth, or rather it is much more likely to subvert it. For can we suppose that God can ever be glorified by such

measures as are repugnant to charity and humanity, and contrary to the principles both of nature and religion? Such a conduct is no less injurious to truth than to the public peace and tranquillity of mankind. To promote and propagate what we believe to be truth by amicable methods, is undoubtedly a real service to the public; but strife and variance, and uncharitable proceedings, are the very bane of human society. Where then shall we search for the true source, or to what cause or principle may it be justly described? To none, I fear, that is praiseworthy or even innocent; but to what is exceedingly blameable, and of which we ought to be ashamed. For in truth it springs from *pride, vanity*, and immoderate *self-love*. Hence, chiefly, proceed those severe judgments and rigorous dealings, which so often appear among Christians, to the dishonour of our holy religion, and the reproach of human nature. An intemperate fondness for our notions, sanctified by specious names, has laid waste our charity, and often made us violate the first principles of humanity and common justice.

To this has been owing most of the calamities and miseries which have often so cruelly infested the Christian world! From this fountain have flowed not only bitter waters, but streams of blood in every age. Inquisitions, persecutions, martyrdoms, murders, massacres, are, in a great measure, to be placed to the account of

this intolerating unchristian spirit. A considerable part of the best and worthiest of mankind, have fallen victims to this barbarous principle. The chief blessings of society it has corrupted and poisoned ; it has robbed men of their mutual affection, benevolence, and esteem ; infused jealousies, kindled contentions, and spread variances far and wide ; it has divided friends, families, and kindreds ; crumbled communities into parties and factions ; burst asunder the strongest obligations, both natural, civil, and religious. It perverts men's understandings, corrupts their judgments, and alienates their affections ; it confounds their ideas of merit and demerit, and makes them estimate characters by false rules and fallacious measures ; it creates uneasy sentiments productive of ill-will ; it nourishes presumption, confidence, and self-conceit ; and destroys the kind instincts of humanity and compassion. A principle so unnatural and perverse, so injurious to virtue and destructive of happiness, is as great a curse to its possessors as to the public. Lastly, it is a discredit and dishonour to religion ; for candour and charity are the chief characteristics of Christians, their peculiar ornament and noblest distinction.

If then we have any regard to plain reason and natural equity ; if we wish peace and prosperity either to our fellow creatures or ourselves ; if we have any concern for the glory of God and

the honour of his dispensations, let us not presume to exercise dominion over other men's faith, or to oppress their understanding, or impair their liberties. Let us cherish sobriety of thought and humility of spirit. Above all, let us put *on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, the end of the commandment, and the very essence of the gospel.*

Sermon on Reason and Revelation.

ARTHUR ASHLEY SYKES, D.D.

DIED.—1756.

WOULD to God that Christians would be content with the plainness and simplicity of the gospel! That they would be persuaded to make no other terms of communion than what Jesus himself hath made! That they would not vend, under the name of *evangelical* truth, the absurd and contradictory schemes of ignorant or wicked men! That they would part with that load of rubbish which makes thinking men almost sink under its weight, and gives too great an handle for infidelity? That they would distinguish betwixt human opinions and revealed truth! That they would see the difference betwixt authority and reason! That they would look upon *Jesus as the Author and Finisher of Faith!* That

they would think that they are not qualified to make any other terms of acceptance with God, than what are already published by our Saviour ! That they would look upon all serious Christians as members of the one body of Christ ! That they would cease from unchristian and inhuman-damning, persecuting, burning one another, for not assenting to the words of men as to the words of God ! and CHRISTIANITY would soon become the joy of the whole earth, and *infidelity* would soon lose its main, I may say its only support.

Dr. Disney's Life of Sykes.

JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

RECTOR OF WESTON FAVELL—DIED 1758.

IN a grove of tulips or a knot of pinks, one perceives a difference in almost every individual. Scarce any two are turned and tintured exactly alike. Each allows himself a little *particularity* in his dress, though all belong to one family ; so that they are various and yet the same. A pretty emblem this of the smaller differences between Protestant Christians. There are modes in religion which admit of variation, without prejudice to sound faith, or real holiness. Just as the drapery on these pictures of the Spring may be formed after a variety of patterns, with-

out blemishing their beauty or altering their nature. Be it so, then, that in some points of inconsiderable consequence, several of our brethren dissent, yet let us all live amicably and sociably together; for we harmonize in principles though we vary in punctilios. Let us join in conversation and intermingle interests; discover no estrangement of behaviour, and cherish no alienation of affection. If any strife subsists, let it be to follow our divine Master more closely in humility of heart and unblameableness of life. Let it be to serve one another most readily in all the kind offices of a cordial friendship. Thus shall we be united, though distinguished; united in the same grand fundamentals, though distinguished by some small circumstantialia; united in one important bond of brotherly love, though distinguished by some slighter peculiarities of sentiment. Between Christians, whose judgments disagree only about a form of prayer or manner of worship, I apprehend there is no more essential difference than between flowers which bloom from the same kind of seed, but happen to be somewhat diversified in the mixture of their colours. Whereas if one denies the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and degrades the incarnate God to the meanness of a mere creature; if another cries up the worthiness of human works, and depreciates the meritorious righteousness of the glorious

Mediator; if a third addresses the incommunicable honours to a finite being, and bows to the image or prays to the faint; these are errors extremely derogatory to the Redeemer's dignity, and not a little prejudicial to the comfort of his people. Against these to remonstrate; against these to urge every argument, and use every diffusive, bespeaks not the censorious bigot, but the friend of truth and the lover of mankind. Whereas to stand neuter and silent, while such principles are propagated, would be an instance of criminal remissness rather than a Christian moderation. For the *persons* we will not fail to maintain a tender compassion: we will not cease to put up earnest intercessions: we will also *acknowledge* and *love* whatever is excellent and amiable in their character. Yet we dare not subscribe their creed; we cannot remit our assiduous, but kind endeavours, if by any means we may reconcile them to more scriptural belief, and a purer worship*.

Meditations.

* "In some former editions I expressed myself on this point *unwarily* and *harshly*. But my meaning and real sentiments were no other than those represented above. The reader, from such unguarded intimations, might too naturally be led to conclude that the author avows, and would stir up a spirit of *persecution*. But this is a method of dealing with opponents in religious doctrines, which he disclaims as absurd, and abhors as iniquitous. He is for no force but that of rational conviction; for no constraint but that of affectionate persuasion. *Thus, if you please, compel them to come in.*"

BENJAMIN HOADLEY, D. D.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.—DIED 1761.

HOW many men who are not contented with being in what they judge a good way themselves, with the advantages of truth and right on their own side ; not without such a due sense of the mistakes and faults of others, as may inspire with a desire to reclaim and amend them, but think their business is to irritate and expose them as far as possible ; and imagine that they cannot be *just* to their own cause without being *unjust* to that of others ; nay, that no one is truly and heartily in their way of thinking, as to the main object of their zeal, who doth not join in the reviling, abusing, and unchristian treatment of all who think otherwise ? This is visible in many of all parties and all sects throughout the world ; and yet this is as certainly contrary to *Christian moderation*, as it is to all hopes of peace in the world. For if *Christian moderation* be a yielding and pliable disposition of mind, then it certainly tends to the uniting the differences of men.

Persecution, in any degree, is the invention and instrument of God's greatest enemy ; and as Christ disdained to make use of outward force in planting the *best* religion in the world ; so it is unchristian and impious to change his method in supporting it, and for this purpose to chuse these very weapons which his enemies used at

first *against* him and his kingdom; and which his Father, in his infinite wisdom, rejected as improper for the good end he then had in view. We may now, therefore, very justly ask, if this be true according to the law of nature and the gospel of Jesus Christ, how great, inexpressibly great, is the guilt of the leaders of that church which places the whole strength of religion in the strength of power and the arm of flesh; which turns the motives of all that is good from inward to outward; which hath no care or concern about *honesty* and *integrity*, but enforces an *unity of voices* by fires, banishments, racks, and such like methods; which forsakes the paths of meekness, plainly pointed out by *God* and *Christ*, and pursues those of desolation and destruction? And then let us consider how much it behoves all who have professed to separate from that church, to separate effectually from the most unchristian and diabolical thing in it; and to keep themselves at a distance from every tendency to the same *evil*; to study the gospel, and to put on that spirit of charity, of peace, and of forbearance, which breathes through every *page* of it. And this will effectually dispose them not to judge or censure, much more not to condemn and injure, oppress and torment, the servants of another master; but to leave their fellow servants in all matters of religious concern, to stand or fall by the judgment of their com-

mon Lord and Master; to whom alone, they must all give an account for themselves.

Sermons.

THOMAS SHERLOCK, D. D.

BISHOP OF LONDON—DIED 1761.

GO to your natural religion: lay before her Mahomet and his disciples, arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands, and tens of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword—shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements; shew her the prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives; let her see his adultery, and hear him alledge revelation and his divine commission, to justify his lust and his oppression. When she is tired with this prospect, then shew her the *Blessed Jesus*, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and the perverse—let her see him in the most retired privacies—let her follow him to the mount and hear his devotions and supplications to God. Carry her to his table to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured but not provoked.

Let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross, and let her view him in the agony of death and hear his last prayer for his persecutors—*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*—When natural religion has viewed both, ask which is the prophet of God? But her answer we have already had—when she saw part of this scene, through the eyes of the Centurion, who attended at the cross, by him she spoke and said, *Truly, this man was the son of God.*

Sermons.

THOMAS SECKER, L. L. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—DIED 1768.

CHRISTIAN zeal indeed is a duty that never was more needful, and never less shewn. But *passion* will do no good. If expressed against those who are indifferent about religion, it will turn them into enemies: if against the enemies of religion, it will make them yet more vehement enemies. Besides, the extravagant things which men say, and attempt against us and our profession, are not always designed injuries, but frequently the effects of misrepresentations and prejudices that have imperceptibly taken hold on

persons who, otherwise, mean tolerably well. Now mildness to such as these is but justice; and to all others it is prudence. Railing is the province which our adversaries have chosen, and let us leave it to them. For whatever success they may meet with that way, as indeed they excel in it, we shall meet with none, but only make *the spirit of Christianity* be misunderstood and ill-spoken of by our own want of it. Therefore, how injuriously soever we may be treated, let us return neither injurious nor harsh treatment for it; nor endeavour to mark out those persons for objects of popular hatred, who are ever so unwearied in labouring to make us so.

And if undue severity of speech must be forbore towards *professed enemies*, much more to those who may, for aught we know, design themselves for friends. Indeed when it is evident that men only put on a pretence of wishing well to Christianity, or the teachers of it; and whilst they affect to charge us with uncharitableness for questioning their sincerity, would despise us for believing them; there we must be allowed to see what plainly appears, and to speak of them both as adversaries and unfair ones. Or when doctrines, whatever the intention of propagating them be, are inconsistent either with the whole, or any part of our religion, it is no uncharitableness, but our duty to lay open the falshood

and the danger of them. Nay, supposing only the legal establishment of religion, or some branch of it be attacked, yet the attempt may both be injurious enough to us, and detrimental enough to the public, to deserve a vigorous opposition. But to shew *passion* and *bitterness* in any of these cases ; to take pleasure in making men's mistakes or designs thought worse than they are ; to judge harshly of them with respect to another world, or expose them to ill-usage in this ; to refuse them due allowances for human infirmity, or be more backward to own their merits than to see their faults ; *such behaviour*, instead of promoting truth, will prejudice the world against it ; will give unbelievers dreadful advantages, and *for ever prevent that union among Christians* which would procure us, above all things, the esteem of men and the blessing of God.

Charge to the Clergy.

JOHN JORTIN, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF LONDON.—DIED 1770.

PERSECUTION is contrary to the spirit of Christianity. The religion of our Saviour is a religion like its author, full of humanity, lenity, and universal benevolence. Though he preached the gospel in vain to many persons whose unbelief proceeded from a corrupted heart,

as himself declared, who knew what was in man, yet he neither called down fire from heaven to consume them, nor sent legions of angels to dragoon them. To their obstinacy and malice he only opposed acts of kindness and miracles, and arguments, and exhortations, and reproofs. He sent forth his apostles into the world not to persecute but to be persecuted, and to establish the worship of God by such methods as himself had employed. 'Tis not to be imagined that out of the mouth which said—*Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye love one another*, could proceed an order to exercise all sorts of cruelty upon men for their errors in religion.

To banish, imprison, plunder, starve, hang, and burn men for their religion, is not the gospel of Christ, it is the gospel of the devil. Where persecution begins Christianity ends, and if the name of it remains the spirit is gone. Christ never used any thing that looked like force or violence, except once, and that was to drive *bad men out* of the temple and not to drive them *in*.

The spirit of persecution is an inveterate enemy to examining matters of faith, and to reformation of the grossest abuses; opposite to this is the spirit of contradiction, and the love of novelty and singularity, with which whosoever is smitten is ever framing new systems of religion and morality, and not able to conceal any of his awkward inventions. Happy and wise is he who

can keep at a proper distance from both *extremes*—he esteems the *gospel* to be the greatest blessing which God hath conferred upon us—he carefully endeavours to understand and to practise it, and to recommend it to others. Acts of civility and humanity he exerciseth towards all, but avoids the society of those who in their conversation and behaviour show a disregard to God, to truth, to probity, and to religion. His faith depends not upon human authority, fashion, and custom; he reasons and judges, and determines for himself; but never forgets the respect due to civil society, or hates those who differ from him. Of all moral qualities the most valuable is piety—the next to it is prudence, and they must be joined together; for piety without prudence becomes enthusiasm and bigotry; and prudence without piety sinks into knavish craft.

Sermons.

THOMAS NEWTON, D.D.

BISHOP OF BRISTOL AND DEAN OF ST. PAULS.—

DIED 1782.

LET your moderation be known unto all men.

Among the many apostolical exhortations to universal benevolence and charity, there is none less insisted upon, and yet none deserving to be

more insisted upon from the pulpit, than this remarkable one of St. Paul. And this, perhaps, may be the reason why moderation, though it is so frequently the subject of discourse, yet is so seldom the object of understanding. The name is in familiar use, but few appear to have a right comprehension of the thing. We not only mistake it in others, but often in ourselves. Our lukewarmness, indifference, phlegm, and dulness, frequently pass with us for moderation, and what is yet stranger, many a fiery, furious bigot, fancies himself a cool reasonable man; as the greatest persecutors for religion will still "*think that they are doing God service.*" But if the thing is understood by few, it is certainly practised by yet fewer. Our debates and controversies, our divisions and parties, afford but too visible, too flagrant proof of the want of it. And even religion, which should be the bond and cement to unite us all, is become the greatest bone of contention; that which should abate and extinguish all animosities, is made itself to heighten and inflame them most. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth.* (said our blessed Saviour) *I came not to send peace but a sword;* not that this was the intent, but only would be the event of his coming; not that he could properly be the cause of division, such is the perfection of the Christian religion; but such is the perverseness of human nature, she should be made the innocent

occasion. Religion, like oil, is smooth and soft of itself, but thrown into the fire, produceth the hottest and the fiercest flame. It is so not only in one part, but all the world over; Christian quarrels with Christian, as bad as heathen with heathen; not only papists with protestants, but protestants with one another; and it is to be wished that churchmen themselves had been entirely free from this leaven. I am sorry that these reproaches can be more easily objected to us than refuted.

Now *moderation*, at the first hearing of the word, conveys the idea of something opposite to a blind, precipitate, furious zeal; and yet, on the other hand, it is by no means to be confounded, nor indeed hath it the least affinity with a lazy, undistinguishing, unthinking indifference. True moderation is equally distant from both these, or any other extremes; for one of its principal characteristics is to proportion its esteem of things to their real worth; to be more or less concerned for them as they are more or less valuable; to yield a weaker or stronger assent as there is weaker or stronger evidence; to be indifferent about indifferent things, and to be zealous about things wherein 'tis good (as the apostle saith) *to be zealously affected*. But though it be zealous for some things, yet it hath no more zeal than *knowledge*, no more warmth than discretion; attends not to one side of the question only,

but to both ; examines without prejudice, argues without passion ; differs from others with civility and good manners ; though mistaken is never obstinate ; though sure is never dogmatical ; would rather win by persuasion than prevail by compulsion ; preserves a medium and measure in things ; avoids every sort of excess and extravagance ; is not even *righteous overmuch* (as Solomon adviseth) ; is not over wise ; is more for promoting what is equitable, than for adhering to the strictness of the law ; tempers justice with mercy ; softens severity with candour ; is rigid to crimes but tender of persons ; punishes the offence but pities the offender ; and, under the worst of provocations and sufferings, behaves with meekness, and patience, and gentleness, towards all men.

Sermon before the House of Lords.

HENRY TAYLOR, A. M.

VICAR OF PORTSMOUTH.—DIED 1785.

WHAT *Procopius* says of *Justinian*, was the general notion of the Christians for many ages. “ He did not believe he was guilty of murder, when he condemned to death those who made a profession of religion different from his own.” But the Christians have gone far beyond this, and massacred the members of their own

churches, merely for differing upon subjects which neither side understood! This was what *St. John* was so amazed at, when he saw the Christian church drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus—*And when I saw, says he, I wondered with great admiration.* St. John was not surprized that the Christians should be persecuted by the Heathens; for this he had seen before, in the reigns of Nero and Domitian; but that the members of the *meek and holy Jesus* should know so little of *the true spirit of Christianity* as to murder one another, was a matter of the greatest astonishment to him. And yet, in this practical apostacy from the most essential part of Christianity, their love to one another, the very criterion by which he declares his subjects should be known to belong to him, all sects among them have agreed without exception. Orthodox and heretic, papist and protestant, churchman and dissenter, all, in their turns, have thought proper to shew their zeal against the *nation-destroying sin* of toleration, as it was called in Cromwell's time; and for fetching the devil out of other men's consciences, have made no scruple of giving him free entrance into their own, *not knowing what spirit they were of.* Good God! what amazing ignorance, prejudice, and presumption, that men, frail men, who know not the essence of a blade of grass, and are liable to oversight, misapprehension, and error, upon the

plainest subjects, should dare to murder and damn their fellow creatures and fellow christians, for not agreeing with them in opinion, about the essence of the Supreme God! O, my soul, come not thou into their secret—unto their assembly, O, my honour, be not thou united!

To conclude, there have been so many divisions made in the church, so much ill-blood raised, and so many dreadful murders committed, under the pretence of preserving the peace of the church, on both sides of the question, upon these abstruse subjects, in which it is impossible for men of the greatest learning and piety to be all of a mind—that it is time to return to the plain doctrine, and spirit of the gospel, and to understand it, every man for himself, with the best help he can get, as well as he is able, and God will require no more of any man; and so to become *one* fold under *one* Shepherd, and bear with one another's errors and infirmities. For the breach of *charity* is a more heinous offence in the sight of God, than a thousand errors upon this, or any other metaphysical subject whatsoever.

Ben Mordecai's Apology.

FRANCIS BLACKBURN, A. M.

ARCHDEACON OF CLEVELAND.—DIED 1787.

THE Protestant religion was called the *gospel*, in contrast with the paganish fables, idolatries, and traditions, which made a considerable and

essential part of the popish system. And *happy* would it have been for *the protestant cause*, had the conductors of it never been known by any name but that of *Evangelics*, or *Gospellers*, by which they were at first distinguished. This would, at least, have reminded them of the impropriety of being divided into sects, from which they adopted so many different denominations, few of whose peculiarities had any countenance in the sacred writings; whence it happened in the end, that what was asserted to *glorify* the word of God in one society, was understood in another to *debase* and *corrupt* it.

Nothing, in our present situation, can be more unworthy of our ministerial calling, than to take advantage of any personal esteem we may have from our people, or of any wrong notions they may entertain of peculiar gifts and privileges belonging to the clerical character, to inculcate our own *private* opinions and sentiments on *disputable* points of doctrine, as matters of faith to be believed on the peril of their salvation. We may, and we ought freely to profess our sentiments, and with a becoming modesty give our reasons why we adopt them; but to say to the multitude, *thus* and *thus* ye must *believe*, or be shut out of the kingdom of heaven, may amaze and terrify the ignorant and the fearful, and procure an outward assent to what is advanced with such assurance; and in

certain circumstances may serve, perhaps, to gain over numbers to strengthen a sect or a party, but will not add one grain of Christian knowledge, or Christian edification to the reasonable mind of the humble hearer, who, whatever may be pretended, is as much intitled to the knowledge of the truth as the ablest of his teachers. *True CHRISTIANITY* speaks another language. *Search the scriptures whether these things are so. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God? Beware of false prophets. Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? I speak, says the great apostle of the Gentiles, as to wise men, judge ye what I say.*

Be *these* our rules in our teaching, and be *these* our instructions to our hearers. Let us be clothed with the same *moderation*, and with the same *humility*; and, as far as possible, prevail with our people to make themselves judge, from their own diligent study of the scriptures, what *true Christianity* is. And let us be assured, that the more we succeed in these exhortations and endeavours; the more sincere believers, and the more true servants of God we shall find among them; and what is still more, we shall find more agreement in opinions, more union of affections, and more edification every way among ourselves, than ever yet was produced, or ever will be, either by the terrors or allurements invented by the wisdom of the

world, to enforce uniformity of faith and worship, or by the peremptory decisions and sentences of particular teachers, pretending with *unabashed assurance* to supernatural illuminations. The glory cannot be great in either case, when the numbers that are added, either to an established system, or to a sect or party deviating from it, are merely the profelytes of ignorance and credulity.

Four Discourses.

EDMUND LAW, D. D.

BISHOP OF CARLISLE.—DIED 1787.

WE are still apt to confine the gospel of our Lord as his primitive disciples sometimes did, to particular nations, churches, sects, and opinions; to contend vehemently either about things in their own nature abstruse and difficult to be understood, and therefore not necessary to be determined; or else such lighter matters as the ceremonies, circumstances, and outward forms of its administration, instead of explaining and recommending the true nature, end, and design of it; of being intent upon enlarging its real kingdom, and taking care to maintain those works which are intrinsically *good*, and ever *profitable to men*; instead of attending to that more excellent way which the same blessed apostle shewed us;

that *bond of perfectness* which he has earnestly exhorted us to put on above all things ; which he has taught us to esteem above all *faith* and *knowledge*, and even the best miraculous *gifts*.

Let us then, instead of judging others, or hastily determining of their state, take care to set a due value on, and to secure our own salvation : instead of charging God foolishly and ungratefully, for not having imparted the same benefits to all which we enjoy ; let us rather be giving him continual thanks for his *unspeakable gift*, and endeavouring to employ it to his glory. Let us be intent on studying the pure word of God, and careful to interpret it in such a manner as may do most honour to its author, and at all times encourage a free and an impartial study of it. 'Tis now high time to do this, and to awake out of sleep, since our reformation is much nearer than when we first believed ; and it is to be wished, that we ourselves could be persuaded to examine our own state before others are obliged to do it for us ; that we were disposed to help and forward, rather than check, the progress of every serious enquiry ; and stop any farther improvements in the knowledge of that, which of all things deserves and wants them most, rather than withstand a general reformation in religion, by rigorously insisting on, and obtruding such things for doctrine as are the com-

mandments of men, and very foreign to the essence of it; instead either of entertaining that anti-christian kind of spirit, which calls down fire from heaven on all who do not receive us; which delights in straitening the way to life, and shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, or incurring the woe denounced against those hypocrites who are desirous of lading men with heavy burdens, and binding upon them things which are too grievous to be borne, and which they know that none need touch with one of their fingers. As we see the faults and follies of past ages, a double woe will be to us, if instead of taking warning by them, and avoiding the like, we are resolved to tread the same steps, and fill up the measure of our fathers.

Theory of Religion.

JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.—

DIED 1791.

AND when Jehu departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, coming to meet him. And he saluted him and said, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? and Jehonadab answered, it is. If it be, give me thine hand! 'Tis very possible that many good men may entertain peculiar opinions, and some of them may

be as singular herein, as even Jchonadab was. And it is certain, so long as *we know* but *in part*, that all men will not see all things alike, it is an unavoidable consequence of the present weakness and shortness of human understanding, that several men will be of several minds in religion as well as in common life. So it has been from the beginning of the world, and so it will be *till the restitution of all things*. Nay, farther; although every man necessarily believes that every particular opinion which he holds is true, yet can no man be assured that all his own opinions, taken together, are true. Nay, every *thinking* man is assured they are not, seeing to be ignorant of many things, and to mistake in some, is the necessary condition of humanity. *This*, therefore, he is sensible is his own case. He knows, in the general, that he himself is mistaken. Although in what particulars he mistakes, he does not, perhaps cannot know. I say perhaps he cannot know. For who can tell how far invincible ignorance may extend? Or what comes to the same thing, invincible prejudice, which is so often fixed in tender minds, that it is afterwards impossible to tear up what has taken so deep a root. And who can say, unless he knew every circumstance attending it, how far any mistake is culpable? Seeing all guilt must suppose some concurrence of the will of which he *only* can judge who searcheth the heart. Every

wise man, therefore, will allow others the same liberty of thinking which he desires they should allow him; and will no more insist on their embracing his opinions, than he would have them to insist on his embracing theirs. He bears with those who differ from him, and only asks *him* with whom he desires to unite in love that single question: *Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?*

We may learn hence what is a *catholic spirit*. It is not an indifference to all opinions, nor an indifference as to public worship, nor an indifference to all congregations. But a man of a truly catholic spirit, while he is steadily fixt in his religious principles, in what he believes to be *the truth, as it is in Jesus*: while he firmly adheres to that worship of God which he judges to be most acceptable in his sight, and while he is united by the tenderest and closest ties to one particular congregation: his heart is enlarged towards all mankind, those he knows and those he does not: he embraces with strong and cordial affection, neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies. This is catholic, or universal love. And he that hath this, is of a *catholic spirit*. For love alone, gives the title to this character. Catholic love is a *catholic spirit*. But if we take this word in the strictest sense, a man of a *catholic spirit* is one who, in the manner above-mentioned, gives his hand to all whose hearts are right with

his heart. One who knows how to value and praise God for all the advantages he enjoys; with regard to the knowledge of the things of God; the true scriptural manner of worshipping him; and, above all, his union with a congregation fearing God and working righteousness. One, who retaining these blessings with the strictest care, keeping them as the apple of his eye, at the same time loves his friends as brethren in the Lord, as members of Christ, and children of God; as joint partakers now of the present kingdom of God, and fellow-heirs of his eternal kingdom; all, of whatever opinion or worship, or congregation, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; who love God and man; who rejoicing to please, and fearing to offend God, are careful *to abstain from evil, and are zealous of good works.*

Thou, O man of God, think on these things. If thou art already in this way, go on. If thou hast heretofore mistook the path, bless God who hath brought thee back. And now run the race which is set before thee in the royal way of universal love. Take heed lest thou be either wavering in thy judgment, or straitened in thy bowels. But keep an even pace, rooted in the faith once delivered to the saints, and grounded in love, in true *catholic love*, till thou art swallowed up in love for ever and ever.

Sermon on a Catholic Spirit.

GEORGE HORNE, D. D.

BISHOP OF NORWICH.—DIED 1791.

WHILE *zeal* is recommended, let not *charity* be forgotten. They are by no means incompatible. Who more *zealous* than the great apostle of the Gentiles? And where can be found a *brighter* example of *charity*? Boldly confuting and reproofing false doctrines and corrupt practices, but ever ready to devote himself for the welfare of those among whom they prevailed. After his own example, he directs others to *Speak the truth in love*, so to maintain *truth* as not to violate *charity*. A golden precept, worthy to be engraven on the hearts of all who may be called forth *to contend for the faith*, that they may do honour to their cause, and no dishonour to themselves, by the manner of proposing them. The weight of the reasons will not be at all diminished by the courtesousness of the address; in its effect it will be much increased. Mankind care not to be driven; they must be led into all truth. It was the method practised by the apostles. It should be practised by their successors.

Could a plainer declaration have been made that the conquests of the MESSIAH were not to be of a secular nature; that his kingdom was not of this world? If *my kingdom were of this world*, saith he of himself, *then would my servants*

fight. But, lo ! he taketh from them the weapons of war. Was there a shield or sword seen among the thousands of the Israel of God ? No shield but that of faith ; no sword but that of the spirit. Like their great leader, they encountered their adversaries with patience, and overcame by suffering. So far was the advent of CHRIST from carrying with it any appearance of war, that the nations at the time lay hushed in the tranquillity of an *universal peace*. *He shake peace to the heathen*, as well as to his own people the Jews. The waves of this troublesome world ceased to toss themselves, and a delightful calm seemed to forbode the approach of those halcyon days when *the Prince of Peace* should make his abode among us ; like the stillness of that hallowed night on which the angelic choir descended to sing *peace on earth*, peace with God by the pardon of sin ; peace with ourselves by the answer of a clear conscience ; peace with one another by **MUTUAL CHARITY**.

O divine *peace*, how lovely and how pleasant dost thou appear ! How happy and heavenly is the kingdom of the Messiah where thou art found ! Who would not wish to see, who would not labour to promote, the full accomplishment of prophecy in the extension of the kingdom and dominion of Christ, *from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth*, that so all nations of the world might remember themselves, and turn to the

Lord Jesus, as many as did at the first preaching of the gospel? And let *the daughter of Zion* lead the way, restored to her pre-eminence among the churches! We will not envy her the honour as she formerly envied us *Gentiles*, but rather rejoice and shout with her in the day when she shall be led to acknowledge her king—the king of righteousness, salvation, and peace; the once lovely, but now highly exalted *Jesus of Nazareth*; who came to visit us in great humility, and shall come again at the appointed hour to judge the world—when we shall behold him glorious as *Jerusalem* herself can wish, riding upon the heavens, in power and majesty unutterable, amidst the acclamations of saints and angels! Amen.

Sermons.



PART II.

TESTIMONIES

IN BEHALF OF CANDOUR & UNANIMITY,

BY DIVINES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.*

GEORGE CAMPBELL, D. D.

PRINCIPAL OF MARISCHAL COLLEGE, ABERDEEN*.

“CHRISTIANITY,” it hath been said,
“is not founded in argument.” If it
were only meant by these words, that the reli-
gion of Jesus could not, by the single aid of
reasoning, produce its full effect upon the heart,
every true Christian would cheerfully subscribe
to them. No arguments, unaccompanied by the

* This most excellent divine is still living, and on account of the infirmities of age, has just resigned his principalship, which he held for a long series of years with distinguished reputation. To his lectures and writings I was first indebted for enlarged ideas of the Christian religion. Under such circumstances, the reader will pardon me for deviating, in this single instance, from my established rule of admitting no living writers. *Gratitude*, indeed, has prompted it, and may good Dr. Campbell (now his sun is fast setting) experience the consolations of that divine religion whose evidences he has ably illustrated, and whose spirit, both in his life and writings, he has happily exemplified.

influences of the holy spirit, can convert the soul from sin to God; though even to such conversion, arguments are by the agency of the spirit rendered subservient. Again, if we were to understand by this aphorism, that the principles of our religion could never have been discovered by the natural and unassisted faculties of man; this position, I presume, would be as little disputed as the former. But if, on the contrary, under the cover of an ambiguous expression, it is intended to insinuate that those principles from their very nature, can admit no rational evidence of their truth (and this, by the way, is the only meaning which can avail our antagonists) *the gospel*, as well as *common sense*, loudly reclaims against it.

The Lord JESUS CHRIST, the author of our religion, often argued, both with his disciples and with his adversaries, as with reasonable men, on the principles of reason. Without this faculty, he well knew they could not be susceptible either of religion or of law. He argued from prophecy, and the conformity of the event to the prediction. He argued from the testimony of John the Baptist, who was generally acknowledged to be a prophet. He argued from the miracles which he himself performed, as uncontroverted evidences that God Almighty operated by him, and had sent him. He expostulated with his enemies, that they did not use their rea-

son on this subject—*Why, says he, even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?* In like manner we are called upon by the apostles of our Lord, to act the part of *wise men*, and *judge* impartially of *what they say*. Those who do so are highly commended for the candour and prudence they discover in an affair of so great consequence. We are even commanded to, *be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of our hope; in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves; and earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*. God has neither in natural or revealed religion, *left himself without a witness*; but has in both, given *moral and external evidence sufficient to convince the impartial, to silence the gainsayer, and to render inexcusable the atheist and the unbeliever*. This evidence it is our duty to attend to and candidly to examine. We must *prove all things*, as we are expressly enjoined in holy writ, if we would ever hope to *hold fast that which is good*.

So far, therefore, am I from being afraid of exposing Christianity by submitting it to the test of *reason*; so far am I from judging this a trial which it is by no means fitted to endure, that I think, on the contrary, the most violent attacks that have been made upon the faith of Jesus have been of service to it. Yes: I do not hesitate to affirm, that our religion hath been in-

debted to the *attempts*, though not to the *intentions* of its bitterest enemies. They have tried its strength indeed, and by trying they have displayed its strength, and that in so clear a light as we could never have hoped, without such a trial, to have viewed it in. Let them therefore write, let them argue, and when arguments fail, let them even cavil against religion as much as they please. I should be heartily sorry that ever in this island, the asylum of liberty, where *the spirit of Christianity* is better understood (however defective the inhabitants of it are in the observance of its precepts) than in any other part of the Christian world; I should, I say, be sorry, that in this island so great a disservice were done to religion, as to check its adversaries in any other way than by returning a *candid* answer to their objections. I must at the same time acknowledge, that I am both ashamed and grieved when I observe any friends of religion betray so great a diffidence in the goodness of their cause (for to this diffidence it can only be imputed) as to show an inclination for recurring to more *forcible* methods. The assaults of infidels, I may venture to prophesy, will never overturn our religion. They will prove not more hurtful to the Christian system, if it is allowed to *compare small things with greatest*, than the boisterous winds are said to prove to the sturdy oak. They shake it im-

petuously for a time, and loudly threaten its subversion, whilst, in effect—they only serve to make it strike its roots the deeper and stand the firmer for ever.

Dissertation on Miracles.

HENRY SCOUGAL, A. M.

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF GOD IN THE SOUL OF
MAN.*.

MANY Christians are ready to apply all the prophecies and imprecations of the Old Testament, in their very prayers, against those that differ from them ; and ordinarily the animosities are greatest where the differences are least ; and one party of a reformed church shall be more incensed against another, than either against the superstition and tyranny of Rome, or the

* Mr. Scougal flourished towards the end of the last century. The other Scotch authors, whose testimonies are here introduced, *died* within these last twenty years. With Dr. Gerard, my old theological tutor, and with Dr. Shaw, whose ministry I attended, I had the pleasure of being acquainted, and am happy in paying this tribute of respect to their memory. Just as the above testimony of Scougal was going to the press, an idea arose in my mind that he belonged to the Scotch *episcopal* church. The testimony, however, remains precisely the same, and the serious good sense of the author renders it deserving of very particular attention.

carnality of the Mahometan faith; yea, perhaps you may find some who agree in opinion and only differ in several ways of expressing the same thing, and yet can scarce look upon one another without displeasure and aversion. But, alas! how much do these men disparage that religion for which they appear so zealous! How much do they mistake *the spirit of Christianity*? Are the persons whom they hate, greater enemies to religion than those who persecuted the apostles and martyrs for professing it? And yet these were the persons whom our Saviour commanded his disciples to love, and himself did pray for those that crucified him, and severely checked the disciples, when, by a precedent brought from the Old Testament, they would have called for fire from heaven on those who would not receive them; telling them, *they knew not what spirit they were of*; i. e. they did not consider by what spirit they were prompted to such cruel inclinations; or, as others explain it, they did not yet sufficiently understand *the temper and genius of Christianity*, which is *pure and peaceable, gentle and meek—full of sweetness and full of love*.

If men would impartially examine their hatred and animosities against the enemies of their religion, I fear they would find them proceed from a principle which themselves would not willingly own. Pride and self-conceit will make a man disdain those of a different persuasion, and think

it a disparagement to his judgment that any should differ from it. Meer nature and self-love, will make a man hate those who oppose the interest and advancement of that party which himself hath espoused. Hence men are many times more displeased at some small mistakes in judgment, than the greatest immoralities in practice; yea, perhaps they will find a secret pleasure, and wicked satisfaction, in hearing or reporting the faults or scandals of their adversaries. Certainly *the power of religion*, rightly prevailing in the soul, would mould us into another temper; it would teach us to *love*, and *pity*, and *pray* for the persons, as well as hate and condemn the errors they are supposed to espouse. It would make us wish their conversion rather than their confusion, and be more desirous that God would fit them for another world, than that he would take them out of this. We may indeed wish the disappointment of their wicked purposes; for this is *charity* to them, to keep them from being the unhappy instruments of mischief in the world; but he that can wish plagues and ruin to their persons, and delights in their sins, or in their misery, hath more of the devil than the Christian.

Sermons.

WILLIAM CRAIG, D.D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF GLASGOW.

JESUS constantly avoided taking any part in the theological controversies of the Jews, but in so far as he saw it necessary to secure the essential interests of true religion. The errors and corruptions of the Pharisees, as totally destructive of these important interests, he publicly and strenuously opposed. The distinguishing error of the Sadducees, as it tended to destroy the principal foundation upon which he was to propagate the practice of religion, he in like manner publicly confuted and condemned. With relation to every other dispute, as not having an immediate connection with the virtue and happiness of men, he appears to have observed a perfect silence and neutrality. The perpetual aim of his instructions was to propagate the love of God and man, and the duties of a holy life, on the faith that he had come from God as the instructor and saviour of mankind. These essential interests of practical religion being guarded and secured, he neglected all inferior disputes, and taught *the things of God* in such a manner, as either to withdraw the attention of the world from every unessential and intricate debate, or to preserve such a temper of *benignity and meekness* among men, as might for ever unite the hearts, whatever disagreement in their judgments might arise.

It is well known how much theological disputes (oftentimes concerning matters of the most minute and inconsiderable moment) have diverted men's attentions from those essential duties of religion which admit of no dispute; nay, what unjust and violent antipathies, destructive of the spirit and design of all true religion, have arisen from such disputes. This appears to have been the unhappy situation of the Jews and the Samaritans in our Saviour's time, with relation to the controversy which they had about the place where God was to be worshipped. The Jews had openly renounced all social and friendly intercourse with their antagonists, and formed such an odious idea of their character, as created in their breasts the most implacable hatred and rancour. Hence, in order to express in the strongest manner their aversion to our Saviour, and to give him the most opprobrious appellation which their imaginations could devise, they called him a *Samaritan*, and said he had a devil. The manner of our Saviour's deportment towards these religious antagonists, merits our particular attention. It appears from various incidents recorded in the history of his life, that he not only disapproved of that unnatural hatred and antipathy with which they conducted their debate, but that he had in his view entirely to extinguish it. He signified, indeed, in his conversation with the woman of Samaria, that the Jews were in the right on the

subject in debate between them and the Samaritans ; but that, nevertheless, the question which divided them was of small importance in itself, as it concerned not what was most essential in the worship of the Deity ; and by the zeal which he expressed to instruct her, and the rest of the Samaritans, in the doctrines of the gospel, he sufficiently declared, that notwithstanding their difference of opinion on the matter in debate, both Jews and Samaritans were equally capable of being the true worshippers of God. Having thus prepared the way for their mutual reconciliation, our Saviour took every proper occasion to give the Jews a more favourable impression of the Samaritans than they were disposed to entertain, and thereby to destroy their mutual hatred and enmity. Thus when he describes the nature and extent of that benevolence and charity which he came from heaven to propagate among mankind, he describes it as exemplified in the conduct of a *Samaritan*, and sets it in opposition to the conduct of a *Jewish* priest and Levite. By this description he undoubtedly intended to correct the antipathy which the Jews entertained against the Samaritans, as persons totally depraved. It was very probably with the same amicable intention that Jesus reprehended in so strong a manner the severity of his two disciples, when they desired to bring fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans who had opposed him in his journey to Jerusa-

lem—declaring that the hatred and revenge which they expressed was very different from the spirit which he came from heaven to promote among mankind: the purpose of his coming being *not to destroy*, but *to save the lives of men*. With the same intention the Evangelist appears to have recorded the story of the ten lepers whom Jesus cured of their disease. One of them, it is said, was a *Samaritan*, and *his* gratitude for the favour he had received is marked by the Evangelist, and commended by our Saviour, with this particular note of approbation—*that he was a stranger!*

From these few remarks on our Saviour's conduct with relation to the religious controversies of the Jews, it may appear that he intended to exclude from the plan of his instructions every controversy of this nature, which had not an immediate connection with the virtue and immortal happiness of men, and purposely avoided every intricate enquiry or debate which might either perplex their understandings or divide their hearts. *The gospel*, indeed, was delivered by him with a plainness and simplicity which makes it level to the capacity of every honest mind, independent of the subtilty and art of all those curious intricate distinctions by which, in after-ages, the learning and philosophy of men has vainly attempted to explain it.

Life of Christ.

ANDREW GRAY, D. D.

ABERNETHY.

THE noxious disease of indifference to religion in any society, is always greatly cherished and promoted by a factious and divisive spirit in others, by ill-placed and intemperate zeal about points of lesser importance, and of a doubtful nature. *Scepticism* and *bigotry*, how opposite soever to one another, yet are often similar in their influence, and productive of the same effects; they are both equally repugnant to the true spirit of religion. They agree in taking away all distinction between the primary and secondary truths of religion; the one by depressing the former into the obscurity of the latter; the other by exalting the latter to the dignity and importance of the former. The *sceptic* assaults the system of religion by undermining its foundation; the *bigot* by erecting an unwieldy superstructure of perishing materials.

It would be extremely improper for me, at present, to make a dissertation on the various sects and factions which enjoy a legal indulgence amongst us, and far more to enter into a discussion of their separating principles. Perhaps it might justly be thought to favour of that very spirit of animosity which we condemn as so prejudicial to the moral influence of true religion. But in general one might venture to affirm, without offend-

ing the most angry disputant, that the far greater number of controversial points among Protestants are carried to a much greater height, and prosecuted with a keener zeal, than their weight and importance will bear; that amidst so many questions agitated with so much uncharitable humour, the essential points of religion seem to be but little understood, and still less regarded; and that its most sacred laws are often trampled on in the rage of disputation.

What manifold mischiefs doth not this factious and turbulent spirit produce? Particularly in causing many superficial enquirers to think that religion is merely a subject of dispute and opinion, without any relation to life and manners; that its tendency is so far from promoting *peace on earth*, that it serves only to divide mankind more and more. Thus it is that professing Christians, by their *unchristian animosities*, have furnished infidels with the most plausible objections against our holy religion: whereas was this truly amiable institution but fairly delineated, as taught by our Saviour and his Apostles, and its exalted virtues exhibited in the lives of its votaries; it could not fail to gain more proselytes than the most excellent apologies that were ever written in its defence. *These* may convince the judgment by displaying its evidence; but *this* would reach the heart, and captivate the affections to its love and obedience. Happy, indeed, were it, for Protestant members of churches, that

are called *reformed*, if the experience of past ages taught them wisdom to differ in peace and charity, and to *unite* their influence against the adversaries of their common faith. Was this the case, our religious controversies would even become fewer in number, because the minds of men would be better disposed for seeing and embracing the truth, which prejudice and passion are so apt to disfigure and conceal from our view.

To conclude, let us carefully suppress a spirit of faction and party, so destructive of our mutual *union*; and amidst unavoidable differences of opinion, let us still *preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*.

Sermon before the General Assembly, 1767.

PATRICK CUMING, D.D.

THE most candid method of judging of *Christianity*, is to consider it as *one* scheme which will be found to be all consistent, wherein the several parts, as the stones of an arch, are connected with and support each other. Some separate points may give occasion for debates, and be attended with some difficulty; but we ought not to judge of the strength of particular objections, till we have impartially considered revelation in its full extent and natural simplicity.

What Lord Bacon says of science in general, may be well applied to Christianity: " Were it not better (says he) in order to take a full view of a noble hall, to set up *one great light* than with a small lamp to look into every separate corner?"—Many of the objections that have been proposed against the Christian religion, if attentively considered, and candidly examined, may indeed be turned into arguments in its favour. For instance, can that be called an imposture that proposes no motives of worldly honours, riches, or sensual pleasure, to attract our esteem, or invite our choice? Does that religion bear any marks of enthusiasm, which regulates our *zeal* by reason and prudence, calms our furious passions, enlightens our minds with knowledge, dispels our melancholy thoughts, and diffuses a well-grounded joy? Is it the cause of superstition? It is the best, and I may venture to affirm the only security against it, as it gives us the most just and amiable notions of the Supreme Being, as it relieves the conscience from its guilt and fears, reduces the form of religion to great simplicity, and inspires the soul with a rational and steady fortitude. Yea, the danger of superstition is rather increased than diminished by infidelity and irreligion; for it is not possible to divest mankind of that fear which arises from frailty and guilt; and if they should be bereaved of a *rational* and *benevolent* religion, it would be easy to

graft upon that fear any superstition their own folly might devise, or the craft and policy of designing men might impose. Is Christianity an enemy to learning? Where have the sciences flourished so much as in Christian countries, or been so much improved as by learned Christians? The reading of the scriptures, and the reformation of religion, enlarged the minds of men, and encouraged a spirit of free inquiry. Is it a friend to slavery? On the contrary, it delivers the mind from the tyranny of passion, and from the fears of guilt; it calls upon us *to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good*. The spirit of the gospel is a spirit of liberty, abhors oppression of every kind, civilizes our nature, and teaches us humanity even to our enemies. It was Christianity, when fully established, that abolished slavery, the cruelty of masters to their servants, of parents to their children, the barbarous custom of exposing infants, and the bloody shews of gladiators, which were so common in *heathen* Rome in its most civilized state, but were prohibited by laws of *Christian* emperors. Does it excite seditions, and kindle wars? These have taken their rise in every age from the *lusts* and *passions* of men, which first war against the soul, and which religion subdues and calms. Often has it been *the occasion*, never *the cause* of persecution; for nothing is more contrary to the genius of it, when *well understood*, and not perverted by false glosses.

Falſe goſpels were not obtruded on the world till the genuine ſcriptures were every where diſperſed ; and as they were publicly read in the daily worſhip of the Chriſtians, no change could be made but what muſt have been immediately diſcovered. Some philoſophers, from the ſchools of the latter Platonists in Egypt, when they embraced Chriſtianity, introduced endless allegories ; and, in imitation of thoſe who forged writings in the names of Hermes, Zoroaſter, and Pythagoras, began to allow themſelves in what was called *pious frauds*, that they might give authority to their own conceits, or thereby invite philoſophers to join them. But the primitive Chriſtians were plain men, who made it matter of conſcience to tranſmit the pure truths of the goſpel, without any vicious mixture whatſoever, and in a language that was eaſily underſtood by all. Many various readings no doubt there are, which were occaſioned by the numerous tranſcripts that were taken by Chriſtians of what was the rule of their faith and practice : none of theſe various readings, however, affect any one doctrine or duty of Chriſtianity ; but all the copies ſerve to confirm the authenticity of the ſcriptures. Let us not then be moved from the hope of the goſpel, *but hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering—for he is faithful that hath promiſed. And let us conſider one another to provoke unto love and good works.*

The Goſpel preached to the Poor.

ALEXANDER WEBSTER, D. D.

EDINBURGH.

HEARKEN men, brethren, and fathers, to what the Lord our God requires, that all of us may seek the *good* and *peace* of Jerusalem with the greatest sincerity and ardour, especially with respect to its religious interests. For this purpose it is highly necessary that we should acquaint ourselves with our *Bibles*, which contain such exalted sentiments of the most generous disinterested goodness ; which not only recommend the warmest zeal for the temporal and eternal interests of men, by the most amiable precepts and animating examples ; but clearly point out how every one in particular may act his part in promoting the general happiness and felicity.

But while we esteem every truth precious, let us see to it that our *zeal be according to knowledge*, proportioned to the value and importance of things ; and conducted with that wisdom and prudence, that meekness and condescension, which so well become the ministers of the *gospel of peace*, and the followers of the Lamb, who are taught that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*. And as it is self-evident that the true interest and real honour of a Christian church can only be promoted by a steady regard to the laws and institutions of Christ, the alone King and head of it, we would do well to take care

that the doctrines for which we contend, be the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and not the doctrines and commandments of men, lest when we would appear for God, we be found to fight against him, and overthrow that very church which we mean to establish.

Now unto this Almighty, all-sufficient God, who hath been our dwelling place in all generations, a wall of fire round about us, and the glory in the midst of us—unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Sermon preached before the General Assembly, 1754.

WILLIAM LEECHMAN, D. D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

ONE great advantage arising from a *mild* and *moderate* conduct is, that it places us in the most favourable situation for rectifying the mistakes and errors of those who have unhappily fallen into them. As long as we discover a real tenderness for their interests and characters, we may justly hope they will hearken to our reasons, and lay open their minds to conviction. But so soon as we betray anger and bitterness, or use them harshly, we thereby prevent all the effect of the strongest arguments. When we see, for instance, youth, through a fondness for novelty, and the

rashness to which that season of life is liable, hurried away to espouse new opinions with great vehemence, and throw off established doctrines, before they have time to consider and understand them ; if we then discover passion and resentment, we can never hope to have any power over their minds. But if we shew them, by the whole course of our behaviour, that we retain a sincere good will to them, and a hearty concern for their interests ; we may then, perhaps, prevail upon them to listen to our reasonings, and to suspend their forming any fixed judgment about the matter, until cooler thought, and more thorough examination, make them fitter judges of things. The experience of mankind justifies this observation : a man of wisdom and moderation sometimes convinces and reclaims those who have been misled, but *the wrath of man never works the righteousness of God* ; nor can he ever hope to succeed in his designs, who acts counter to the meek and humble spirit of our blessed Saviour. This deserves the consideration of all friends to truth and virtue, and especially of those who are any way concerned in the education of the rising generation. In order to preserve a proper modesty as to our notions and sentiments about things of doubtful disputation, and the circumstantialia of religion, and to abate that positiveness in our own way, which is so opposite to real humility, and which leads us to complain of

the pride of other men's understandings, when there is no other reason for the charge, than that they cannot adopt our notions and phrases. Let us seriously ask ourselves the following questions: Can I pretend to a clearer understanding, to a more diligent and impartial enquiry into revelation, or to greater degrees of divine illumination, than all others who differ in opinion from me? What grounds have I to imagine that I am in the full possession of all divine truths? Do I not acknowledge that I may err? What security then have I, that I do not actually err in some instances, amidst the multitude of opinions which I hold? May I not be in a mistake, nay, in many mistakes, though I am not conscious of the particular instances? Is there not ground to expect that the admission into the regions of perfect light will prove not only an enlargement, but a correction of former views, to men of the wisest, best, and fairest minds?—Such questions, seriously put, and urged upon our own consciences in silence and retirement, and under the awful impression of the presence of the great Searcher of hearts, would naturally check that presumptuous confidence that our own particular views are certainly right, which is so common in the world, and so frequently accompanied with that *wrath of man which never works the righteousness of God*. Such serious soliloquies would lead us to suspect that we are departing from the meek-

ness and humility of the gospel spirit, when we allow ourselves to think and to speak hardly of others, because they do not see every thing just in the same light with us ; or have not freedom to express themselves in our phrases, which are, perhaps, not only unscriptural, but were unknown in the Christian church for many centuries, and can claim no better nor higher original, than the dregs of the scholastic philosophy.

Sermons.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

WHEN the Christian revelation declared one Supreme Being to be the sole object of religious veneration, prescribed the form of worship most acceptable to him ; whoever admitted the truth of it, held of consequence, every other mode of religion to be absurd and impious. Hence the zeal of the first converts to the Christian faith, in propagating its doctrines, and the ardour with which they laboured to overturn every other form of worship. *They* employed, however, for this purpose, no methods but such as suited *the nature of religion*. By the force of powerful arguments they convinced the understandings of men ; by the charms of superior virtue they allured and captivated their hearts. At length the civil power declared in favour of Chris-

tianity; and though numbers, imitating the example of their superiors, crowded into the church, many still adhered to their ancient superstitions. Enraged at their obstinacy, the ministers of religion, whose zeal was still unabated, though their sanctity and virtue were much diminished, forgot so far the nature of their own mission, and of the arguments which they ought to have employed, that they armed the imperial power against these unhappy men; and as they could not *persuade*, they tried to *compel* them to believe. At the same time controversies concerning articles of faith multiplied, from various causes, among Christians themselves; and the same unhallowed weapons which had first been used against the enemies of their religion, were turned against each other. Every zealous disputant endeavoured to interest the civil magistrate in his cause, and each in his turn employed the secular arm to crush or to exterminate his opponents. Not long after, the Bishops of Rome put in their claim to infallibility in explaining articles of faith, and deciding points in controversy; and bold as the pretension was, they by their artifices and perseverance imposed on the credulity of mankind, and brought them to recognize it. To doubt, or to deny any doctrine to which these unerring instructors had given the sanction of their approbation, was held to be not only a resisting of truth, but an act of rebellion against their sacred authority; and se-

cular power, of which, by various arts, they had acquired the absolute direction, was instantly employed to avenge both.

Thus Europe had been accustomed, during many centuries, to see speculative opinions propagated or defended by force; the charity and mutual forbearance which Christianity recommends with so much warmth were forgotten; the sacred rights of conscience and of private judgment were unheard of; and not only the idea of toleration, but even *the word itself*, in the sense now affixed to it, was *unknown*. A right to extirpate error by force was universally allowed to be the prerogative of such as possessed the knowledge of truth; and as each party of Christians believed that they had got possession of this invaluable attainment, they all claimed and exercised, as far as they were able, the rights which it was supposed to convey. The Roman Catholics, as their system rested on the decisions of an infallible judge, never doubted that truth was on their side, and openly called on the civil power to repel the impious and heretical innovators who had risen up against it. The Protestants, no less confident that their doctrine was well founded, required, with equal ardour, the princes of their party to check such as presumed to impugn or to oppose it. Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox, the founders of the reformed church in their respective countries, inflicted, as far as they had

power and opportunity, the same punishments which were denounced against their own disciples by the church of Rome, upon such as called in question any article in their creeds. To their followers, and perhaps to their opponents, it would have appeared a symptom of diffidence in the goodness of their cause, or an acknowledgment that it was not well-founded, if they had not employed in its defence all those means which it was supposed truth had a right to employ.

It was towards the close of the seventeenth century before *toleration*, under its present form, was admitted first into the republic of the United Provinces, and from thence introduced into England. Long experience of the calamities flowing from mutual persecution, the influence of free government, the light and humanity acquired by the progress of science, together with the prudence and authority of the civil magistrate, were all requisite, in order to establish a regulation so repugnant to the ideas which all the different sects had adopted, from mistaken conceptions concerning the nature of religion and the rights of truth, or which all of them had derived from the erroneous maxims established by the church of Rome.

History of Charles the Fifth.

WILLIAM MACGILL, D. D.

AIRE.

IF all that call themselves Christians would agree to live according to the rules of their religion, which are not less clear than excellent; if they would bend their chief attention to the things in which they all agree, and which they themselves must allow to be of the greatest importance, rather than to those in which they happen to differ; if, instead of affecting to distinguish themselves by insolent pretensions to orthodoxy of opinion (which is only paying a compliment to themselves, at the expence of their brethren) they would rather study to be known by the principal and leading mark which Jesus Christ hath assigned for his disciples, their *love to one another*; finally, if each party of Christians, instead of endeavouring to swallow up and destroy the rest by means of the power and policy of this world, would agree to lay aside the little, or if you will the great, peculiarities by which they stand apart from each other, and to unite upon the broad and firm basis of **THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL** contained in the books of the New Testament, the only records of it which they allow to be of divine authority; hearkening with one consent to the voice of their common Master, learning of him who was meek and lowly in heart, speaking the truth to one another in love, endeavouring kindly to set each

other right where they think they are wrong, but never attempting to force from others a submission to their sentiments without inward conviction; not judging or censuring; not hurting or molesting one another upon account of mere differences of opinion, which at the worst can be only errors in judgment, from which no man is entirely exempted—could we see *this temple and spirit* prevailing among Christians, we might yet hope that *the gospel of Christ* would have free course, and be glorified in the world; the truth would get fair play; the name of Christ would be no longer blasphemed among infidels, on account of the scandalous immoral behaviour of his professed followers; all prejudices against our religion, arising from that quarter, would be happily removed; the light of genuine Christianity, shining before men in the lives of its professors, would almost irresistibly invite and engage them to glorify our heavenly Father; the blessing of God would attend their endeavours to propagate it; and this divine religion, seen in its native unsullied lustre, and in its most salutary and beneficial effects, would gradually prevail over the whole earth. Then, in the emphatic language of the prophet, *ten men out of all the nations would take hold of the skirt of him that is a Christian, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is WITH YOU.*

Sermon on Unity among Christ's Disciples.

DUNCAN SHAW, D. D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF ABERDEEN.

WHAT can afford a better opportunity of shewing how opposite an *intemperate zeal* and *persecuting spirit* are to the genius of the religion of Jesus, than the severe rebuke he gave his disciples, for so much as proposing to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans, for an instance of churlish inhospitality to them and their Master? To correct a spirit of *ensoriousness* and *uncharitable judgment*, what excellent hints are suggested by our Lord, in the story of those who were destroyed by the fall of the tower of Siloam? Yet religion has always had its enemies. These will not take the trouble to examine into the nature of it from the character given of it in the sacred oracles, or the picture exhibited of it in the life of the divine Jesus. Such examination would be attended with some trouble. They commonly take that course in judging of it that is attended with the least; and though nothing can be more unfair than such manner of judging, they form their sentiments of it from the lives of those who have no other argument to support their claim to the character of its votaries, but their profession of it. Knowing this, should you not carefully study, if you would approve yourselves

the sincere friends of religion, to add to the other evidences of its excellenc *that* which may be derived from the happy influence it has upon your heart and practice? Few are proper judges of the nature of evidence, or of good reasoning; but all feel the force of *good example*. It has something admirably eloquent in it, and should be always exerted by the votaries of religion as a most powerful recommendation of it. By these means you would adorn *the gospel of Christ*; add to its laurels by making it triumph over the passions, prejudices, and vices of mankind; silence the cavils of its adversaries, and comfort the hearts of its friends.

Comparative View.

ALEXANDER GERARD, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY, KING'S COLLEGE,
ABERDEEN.

IT is by such friction as seems at first fight likely to break it, that the diamond is polished and receives its lustre. In like manner it is by being fretted as it were, with every difficulty and objection, that *truth* is made to show the full brightness of its evidence. The trial distinguishes the true gem from the supposed one, which in the lump promised, perhaps, as fair as it; and plausible falsehoods are often as well received as

real truths, till both have been subjected to an exact and severe examination; but the opposition of argument overturns the former, and renders the certainty of the latter more undeniable. No species of truth has been subjected to a stricter scrutiny, or tried by ruder opposition, than the evidences of our holy religion. As soon as this heavenly gem was presented to the world; both Jews and Heathens fell upon it with so great violence, that if it had the smallest flaw it must have been shattered into pieces. It has been in the possession of the world for many centuries, and numberless attempts have been successively made to prove that it is a worthless counterfeit; but all these attempts have only contributed to evince with stronger evidence, that it is genuine. Every person who is at all acquainted with the subject knows, that infidels have derived their most plausible objections against the excellence and utility of the gospel, from *the corruptions* with which Christianity is blended in the *Papish religion*, and from the *remains* of the tenets and spirit *thence* arising, which still adhere to *many Protestants*. *These* have given them an occasion to represent the gospel as a disputatious system of dry, speculative, intricate, abstruse opinions; as promoting a spirit of superstition, as irrational and abject as any that was ever cherished by any species of Paganism; as giving countenance to priestcraft and usurpation over the consciences of

men—in a word, have given them an occasion to affirm that the gospel has been productive of no advantages to mankind, that, on the contrary, it has been, on the whole, pernicious. When infidels lay hold of these advantages in their opposition to the gospel, this has a strong tendency to push Christians forwards in reforming their religion from all corruptions. When we find plausible or strong objections raised against what has been at any time reckoned a part of Christianity; when we can scarce give a rational and satisfying defence of it, it is natural to examine carefully, whether this be truly a part of the original gospel, or only an addition to it. Many of those articles against which infidels have erected their strongest batteries, and which they have attacked with the fairest prospect of success, have appeared on examination to be of the latter kind, and have been very *generally abandoned*.

Pure notions of Christianity, once introduced, will naturally diffuse themselves. They will by degrees recommend themselves so generally, that all Christians must, in time, imbibe somewhat of the spirit which they raise. Even *Papery* has become considerably different from what it once was; and it would have been still more reformed, if artificial and political restraints had not opposed the tendency of examination and enquiry. Since Christianity began to be depraved by adventitious mixtures, there never was an age in

which there has appeared, so generally as in the present, a disposition to embrace whatever fair enquiry discovered to be the real doctrine of scripture, without any regard to the authority of men, or to the established distinctions of sects ; and no where has this *liberal* spirit prevailed so much, as in those countries in which infidelity has been suffered for the longest space of time to propose all its objections freely, and without the fear of persecution or legal penalties. But the effect of its opposition has hitherto taken place only in part. The heart of a good man triumphs in conceiving the period when it shall have finally taken place ; in anticipating the time when Christianity shall become, in the writings and apprehensions of Christians, as it truly is in the New Testament ; not a system of nice speculations and contentious subtleties, but a series of plain principles, evidently founded in scripture, unmixed with the arbitrary explications and precarious conclusions of fallible men, all naturally touching the heart, commanding congruous affections, and by their joint force directly inculcating *piety* and *virtue*, and promoting the *reformation* and *happiness* of mankind. Let the *Christian religion* be universally and steadily kept in *this* point of view by Christians ; then it will appear that the most formidable objections of Infidels have been directed, not against *this religion itself*, but against *something* totally *different*, though unhap-

pily confounded with it; then the excellence of Christianity will shine conspicuous and indisputable; then all its evidences will operate on the understanding with their full force; then its truth will be strikingly perceived, like the beauty of a fine picture placed in a proper light; then too Christianity will have its native influence on the temper and practice of mankind; it will be *a vital principle of real goodness*; virtue and joy, its amiable children, will stand up and declare, with a voice of irresistible persuasion, that it is truly *the offspring of the Most High*. Every man, who is actuated by the gospel, will feel its truth from his own experience of its efficacy, and will have *the witness within himself*, that it is *the word of God*, the *incorruptible seed* of holiness and felicity. All men will see with their eyes such marks of its power, as cannot suffer them to doubt of its truth and divinity. How glorious a *testimony* would this state of things give to our religion! What splendour would it confer upon its evidences! The gospel, maintained in its purity, and vigorously conceived, tends to produce this state of things; and the vigilance and opposition of infidels is one very powerful mean of exciting Christians to maintain *the gospel in its purity*.

Dissertations on the Genius and Evidences of Christianity.

JOHN LOGAN, F. R. S. EDIN.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF LEITH.

B*Y a fervency of spirit in serving the Lord*, must be understood an ardent and active desire of loving the Lord, of worshipping him in sincerity, and obeying his commands *with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength*. It consists not in a few transient fits and starts of natural devotion, when we are in jeopardy, without help of man; neither is it a wild blaze of religious passion, that flashes and vanishes; much less shall it be profaned by confounding it with those furies, *enthusiasm* and *superstition*, who would drench a country with innocent blood, under pretence of serving the Lord—*Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel. O my soul, enter not thou into their secret!*

True *fervor of spirit* proceedeth from above; it is a beam from *the Father of Lights*, pure and benign, which at once enlightens and warms the mind; it is a ray from *the Sun of Righteousness*, bright even at the beginning, and which *shineth more and more unto the perfect day*; it is a temper wrought into the heart by the holy spirit, compounded of *love* to God and of *zeal* for his honour, attended with *charity* to man.

Do ye consider, my brethren, the dignity and

importance of that religion to which your attachment is required? Do ye, reflect that this is the master-piece of infinite wisdom? That here the Almighty made bare his holy arm and put forth his strength? *All* events, whether prosperous or adverse, whether malignant or benign, have co-operated towards the advancement of *our* religion. Saints have established it by their lives; martyrs have confirmed it by their deaths; hypocrites have added strength to it by their dissimulation; tyrants have purified it by their persecutions; infidels have corroborated it by their opposition; the arrows of its enemies have served for its protection; the resistance which it has met with from the combined wit and genius, and malice of mankind, have brought forth those illustrious and immortal defences which establish its truth upon the basis of demonstration.

Eternal Jehovah! when we transgressed against thy commandments, and lost our original innocence, thy *mercy* forsook us not; thou hadst compassion upon the offspring of Adam; thine eye looked with pity; thou didst lay our help upon *one who was mighty to save*; him, in the fulness of time, the ambassador of *peace*, and *reconciliation*, and *love*, thou didst send. Our ears have heard the joyful sound, our eyes have seen the salvation of God. *This* is a day of the Son of Man! Glory be to God, that *peace* is proclaimed *on earth*, and *good-will* to the children of men!

God of the patriarchs ! who saw afar off
this day : God of the prophets ! who foretold its
 arrival : God of the righteous men ! who desired
 its approach : God of the evangelists and apos-
 tles ! who first beheld *the day of the Messiah* :
 God of the martyrs and confessors ! who honoured
 it with their blood : God of our fathers ! who,
 within these walls, have kept it in remembrance :
 God of our children ! who will commemorate
 it when we shall sleep in the dust : God of time !
 God of eternity ! descend now, make thyself
 known to us ; and fill this house with thy glory.
 Amen.

Sermons, and Celebration of the Lord's Supper.



PART III.

TESTIMONIES IN BEHALF OF CANDOUR & UNANIMITY,

BY

DIVINES AMONG THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D. D.

NORTHAMPTON *.

IF there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. If it indeed be, as it cer-

* The places mentioned after the ministers names are the towns where they exercised their ministry; and when no names of places are specified, the ministers were settled in London, or in its vicinity. It became necessary to use this mode of characterising the Divines of the Kirk of Scotland, and among the Dissenters, because they have not, like those of the Church of England, any ecclesiastical dignities by which they are distinguished.

It gave me particular pleasure, when looking into the works of the amiable and learned Doddridge, to find that he had published a sermon, in which he illustrates and urges the virtues of *Christian candour and unanimity*, which it is the object of this little work to recommend. The above testimony so fully expresses my own sentiments on the

tainly is, a test of true eloquence, that it is suited to strike powerfully upon the minds of all, however different in genius, education; or rank, I cannot but conclude that every one here present must already acknowledge these words to be a remarkable specimen of it, even before we proceed particularly to illustrate them; and having felt something of their pleasing energy, while we have been reading them, is ready to confess, that the sentiment they contain is finely conceived, and pathetically expressed. But ill shall we answer the great design of the Apostle, if we rest in the mere acknowledgment of this. His views were much more worthy of him whose minister he was; he laboured to diffuse, through the breasts of his fellow Christians, that *spirit of love* which was in his own, as a constant spring of living water. And what more convincing proof can be given of the deplorable disorder of men's minds, than that such addresses, proceeding from such a man, yea, I will add, the yet more forcible address of his divine Master and ours, should have produced so little effect; that such discord and animosity

subject, that I have made it introductory to the remaining contents of the volume. Of this sermon, Dr. Kippis, in his *Life of Doddridge*, has justly observed, "This is an admirable discourse, and exhibits a fine transcript of the author's own mind, which was fully *attuned* to the virtue he recommended." Dr. Doddridge died, 1751, at Lisbon, whither he went for the recovery of his health.

should so early, so long, I had almost said so universally prevail in *the Christian church*, amidst all the incentives, amidst all the intreaties, amidst all the tender adjurations, as well as the god-like examples, which *the sacred oracles* exhibit to charm us into the *most endeared affection*. But, alas ! these incentives and intreaties, these adjurations and examples, are overlooked, as not having lustre enough to detain our attention. For we too generally seem to study our *bibles* (if we study them at all) for amusement or ostentation, rather than *practical* instruction. We fix on some curious incident or high speculation, and are first ingenious to explain it where it cannot be explained, and then impassioned to defend it, as if it were fundamental truth, till we beat out the sacred gold so thin, that every breath of air carries it away ; whilst the plain things, that tend to inspire an heavenly temper, and lead us on to the most exalted goodness, are slightly passed over, as too obvious and vulgar to engage our attention, or excite our emulation. Thus we feed our pride by what was intended to humble it, and make that the prize of mutual contention, which was designed to be the bond of love. What *wise* man has not observed this ? What *good* man has not lamented it ? Yet, alas ! who so *wise* as in all instances to have avoided it ? Who so *good* as to have exerted himself to the utmost to cure it ?

Where we, and our brethren, *agree* in attending to *the one thing* which Christianity was designed to teach us, surely an agreement in *that* should unite our minds more than any difference, consistent with that agreement, should divide them. To reverence with filial duty and love the God of heaven, and to adore him with integrity of heart; to honour Jesus, his son, as his brightest image, subscribing to the truth of all he is known to have revealed, and the authority of all he is apprehended to command; conscientiously to abstain from every known evil; and to practice, as far as human infirmity will permit, the comprehensive precepts of *living soberly, righteously, and godly, still looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*; assuredly expecting a future judgment, and an eternal world; carefully endeavouring to prepare for both, by setting the affections on those great objects which the gospel opens to our view; and finally, being habitually ready to sacrifice life, and all its enjoyments, to that blessed hope—This, this, my brethren, is the essential character of every Christian; and where we see *this*, should we esteem it a *difficult* thing to live peaceably with him in whom we discern it? Should we arrogate it to ourselves as any high praise, that we do not censure, that we do not grieve, that we do not injure him, because he follows not *us*? Is this the man to be hated or suspected? I will

add, can we refuse to esteem and embrace him, merely because he worships in another assembly, or according to a different form ; because he expresses his apprehensions about some of these doctrines in different words ; because he cannot see all that we think we discern in some passages of scripture ; or because he imagines he sees something which we discern not ? Is it, after all, so great a matter to love a character, which, amidst all its imperfections, is, in the general, so justly amiable ? Nay, instead of thinking much of any acts of kindness which it is in our power to perform for such a fellow disciple, ought we not rather to lament that we can do no more for his service ? Ought we not to endeavour rather to supply, in our fervent prayers to God, the lack of that further service which *Christian* benevolence dictates, but which the narrow limits of our condition and our nature will not allow us to perform ?

Love not only guards the mind from the furious and diabolical passions of rage, envy, malice, and revenge, which tear it like a whirlwind, which corrode it like a cancer, which consume it like *rattenness in the bones*, but fills it with a thousand gentle and pleasing sensations. *Love* distils a fragrant balm into the soul, that, while it heals the wounds which contrary passions have made, diffuses a most grateful and reviving perfume, most justly compared to the ointment poured

on Aaron's head, or the refreshing dew descending on Hermon and Sion, and making all the country between them to share in its copious blessings. Let us often reflect with ourselves, how amiable and excellent it is ! what an ornament ! and indeed, with all its meekness and tenderness, what a defence to true Christianity ! Let us accustom ourselves to think, so far as our best information reaches, what the face of the Christian church has, in fact, been, amidst all the mutual animosities that have reigned among its members ; and, on the other hand, let us try to imagine what it would have been, if that *pacific, gentle, beneficent* temper, which *the gospel* recommends, had constantly, had generally been prevalent, and every angry, turbulent, and malignant thought and passion had been brought into sweet subjection to the laws of Christ. But who can make the computation, whether we consider its aspect on present, or on future happiness ? Who can calculate how *widely* Christianity would have been spread, while the admiring world had been charmed by so bright a light, had been melted by so celestial a flame ? Who can imagine what delights had sprung up in every breast, and how they had been multiplied by reflection from each ? Above all, who can conceive how large a colony the regions of perfect love and blessedness would have received from the peopled earth !

The lowest understanding, the meanest education, the most contemptible abilities, may suffice to give hard names, and to pronounce severe censures. A harsh *anathema* may be learnt by heart, and furiously repeated by one that could scarce read it; and, as was in truth the case, in some ancient councils, may be signed by those that cannot write their names. But *true catholicism of temper* is a more liberal thing; it proceeds from more enlarged views; it argues a superior greatness of mind, and a riper knowledge of men and things. And the man, who is blessed with such advantages, should be so much the more solicitous that he does not, on any provocation, add the weight of his example to so bad a cause as that of uncharitableness *always* is. He owes it to God, and to the world, that such an influence be employed to the happy purposes of healing the wounds of the Christian church, and of conciliating the affections of good and worthy men towards each other, till their *united* counsels can regulate its disorders, and restore to it a form more worthy of itself.

And Oh! may the God of the spirits of all flesh, *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who is *the Author of Peace and Lover of Concord*, hear the prayers in which our hearts would unite with all our brethren: humbly interceding for the prosperity of the universal church, " That

it may be so guided and governed by his good spirit, that all who profess, and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold *the faith once delivered to the saints*, in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life, through Jesus Christ." Amen.

Sermon on Candour and Unanimity.

RICHARD BAXTER *.

DIED 1691.

THE Jews, that persecuted Christ and his Apostles, had the testimony of Paul himself, that they had a *zeal for God, but not according to knowledge* ; and St. Paul saith of the deceivers and troublers of the Galatians (whom he wisheth even cut off) that they did zealously affect them, but not well. And he saith of himself, while he persecuted Christians to prison and to death—I *was zealous towards God, as ye are all this day*. Was not the Papist's St. Dominic, that stirred up the persecution against the Christians in France and Savoy, to the murdering of many of them, a very *zealous* man ? And are not the butchers of the inquisition zealous men ? And were not the

* This great and good man was one of the most *praiseworthy* writers of the last century. A large volume might be extracted out of his writings, in behalf of candour, charity, and moderation.

authors of the third canon of the general council at the Lateran, under Pope Innocent the third, very *zealous* men, that decreed that the Pope should depose temporal lords, and give away their dominions, and absolve their subjects, if they would not exterminate the godly, called *heretics* ? Hath not zeal caused many of later times to rise up against their lawful governors, and many to persecute the church of God, and deprived the people of their faithful pastors, without compassion on the people's souls ? Doth not Christ say of such zealots—*The time cometh, when whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service.* Therefore Paul saith, *it is good to be zealously affected always in a good matter* ; showing you that zeal, indeed, is good, if sound judgment be its guide. It is sad to observe what odious actions are committed in all ages of the world by the instigation of misguided zeal, and what a shame *an impudent zealot* is to his profession ; while making himself ridiculous in the eyes of the adversaries, he brings his profession itself into contempt, and maketh the ungodly think that the religious are but a company of transported, brain-sick zealots ; and thus they are hardened to their perdition. How many things doth unadvised affection provoke well-meaning people to, that afterwards will be their shame and sorrow ? Labour, therefore, for *knowledge* and *soundness of understanding*, that you may know truth from false-

hood, good from evil, and may walk confidently while you walk safely; and that you become not a shame to your profession, by a furious prosecution of that which you must, afterwards, confess to be an error; by drawing others to that which you would, after, wish that you had never known yourselves. And yet, see that all your knowledge have its efficacy upon your *heart and life*; and take every *truth* as an instrument of God to reveal himself to you, or to draw your heart to him, and conform you to his holy will.

Keep right apprehensions of the excellency of *charity and unity* among believers, and receive nothing hastily that is against them; especially take heed, lest under pretence of their authority, their number, their soundness, or their holiness, you too much addict yourselves to any sect or party, to the withdrawing of your *special love* and *just communion* from other Christians, and turning your zeal to the interest of your party, with the neglect of the common interest of the church; but love a Christian as a Christian, and promote the *unity and welfare* of them all. It is a most dangerous thing to a young convert to be ensnared in a sect; it will, before you are aware, possess you with a feverish sinful zeal for the opinions and interests of that sect; it will make you bold in bitter invectives and censures against those that differ from them; it will corrupt your church communion, and fill your very prayers

with partiality and human passions; it will secretly bring malice, under the name of zeal, into your minds and words; in a word, it is a secret but deadly enemy to *Christian love and peace*. Let them that are wiser, and more orthodox and godly than others, shew it as the Holy Ghost directeth them, James, chap. iii. ver. 13, 14, &c. *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying (or zeal) and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish: for where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality (or wrangling) and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

Christian Directory.

ROBERT BARCLAY,

APOLOGIST FOR THE QUAKERS.—DIED 1691.

CHRISt abundantly hath shewn by his example, whom we are chiefly to imitate in religious matters; that is, by persuasion and the

power of God, not by whips, imprisonments, banishments, and murderings, that *the gospel* is to be propagated; and that those that are the propagators of it, are often to suffer by the wicked, but never to cause the wicked to suffer. When he sends forth the disciples, he tells them, he sends them forth as *lambs among wolves*, to be willing to be devoured, not to devour; he tells them of their being whipped, imprisoned, and killed for their conscience, but never that they shall either whip, imprison, or kill—and, indeed, if Christians must be as lambs, it is not the nature of lambs to destroy or devour any.

It was contrary to the nature of Christ's gospel and ministry to use any force and violence in the gathering of souls to him. This he abundantly expressed in his reproof to the two sons of Zebedee, who would have been calling for *fire from heaven* to burn those that refused to receive Christ. It is not to be doubted but this was as great a crime as now to be in an error concerning the faith and doctrine of Christ. That there was not power wanting to have punished those refusers of Christ, cannot be doubted; for they that could do other miracles might have done this also. And, moreover, they wanted not the precedent of an holy man under the law, as did Elias—yet we see what Christ saith to them—*Ye know not what spirit ye are of; for the son of*

man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Here Christ shews that such kind of zeal was no ways approved by him ; and such as think to make way for Christ, or his gospel, by this means, do not understand *what spirit they are of.* But if it was not lawful to call for fire from heaven to destroy such as refused to receive Christ, it is far less lawful to *kindle fire upon earth* to destroy those that believe in Christ, because they will not believe, nor can believe, as the magistrates do, for conscience sake. And if it was not lawful for the apostles, who had so large a measure of the spirit, and were so little liable to mistake, to force others to their judgment—it can be far less lawful now for men that, as experience declareth, and many of themselves confess, are fallible, and often mistaken, to kill and destroy all such as cannot, because otherwise persuaded in their minds, judge, and believe in matters of conscience, just as they do. And if it was not according to the wisdom of Christ, who was, and is, King of Kings, by outward force to constrain others to believe in him or receive him, as being a thing inconsistent with the nature of his ministry and spiritual government, do not they grossly offend him that will needs be wiser than he, and think to force men, against their persuasion, to conform to their doctrine and worship ? The word of the Lord said,

not by power and by might, but by the spirit of the Lord; but these say, not by the spirit of the Lord, but by might and carnal power.

Apology for the Quakers.

WILLIAM BATES, D. D.

DIED.—1699.

WE are commanded, *above all things, to have fervent charity among ourselves.* This principally respects Christians, who are united by so many sacred and amiable bands, as being formed of the same eternal seed, children of the same heavenly Father, and joint heirs of the same glorious inheritance. *Christian charity* hath a more noble principle than the affections of nature; for it proceeds from the love of God, shed abroad in believers, to make them *one heart and one soul*, and from a more divine pattern, the example of Christ, who hath by his sufferings restored us to the favour of God, that we should *love another even as he hath loved us.* This duty is most strictly enjoined, for without *love*, angelical eloquence is but an empty noise (1 Cor. 13.) and all other virtues have but a false lustre: prophesy, faith, knowledge, miracles, the highest outward acts of charity or self-denial, the giving our estates to the poor, or bodies to mar-

tyrdom, are neither pleasing to God, nor profitable to him that does them.

God discovers his nature, that we may *imitate* him, and his works, that we may *glorify* him. All the precepts of the gospel are to embrace Christ by a lively faith, to seek for righteousness and holiness in him ; *to live godly, righteously, and soberly, in the present world.* When our Saviour was on earth, the end of his sermons, as appears in the gospels, was to regulate the lives of men ; to correct their *vicious passions*, rather than to explicate the *greatest mysteries*. Other religions oblige their disciples, either to some *external* actions that have no *moral* worth in them, so that it is impossible for any one that is guided by *reason* to be taken with such vanities, or they require things *incommodious* and burthenfome. The priests of *Baal* cut themselves ; and among the *Chinese*, though in great reputation for wisdom, their *penitents* expose themselves, half-naked, to the injuries of the sharpest weather, with a double cruelty and pleasure of the devil, who makes them freeze here, and expects they should burn for ever hereafter. It is not the most strict observance of serious trifles, nor submitting to rigorous austerities, that ennobles human nature, and commends us to God. The most *zealous* performers of things indifferent, and that chastise themselves with a bloody discipline ; labour for nothing, and may pass to hell through purga-

tory ; but *the religion of Christ* reforms the understanding and will, and all the actions depending on them ; it chases away *error*, and *vice*, and *hatred*, and sheds abroad light and love, purity and peace, and forms on earth a lively representation of that pure society that is in Heaven.

Harmony of the Divine Attributes.

JOHN HOWE, A. M.

AUTHOR OF THE LIVING TEMPLE.—DIED 1705.

TO judge other men's consciences is of so near affinity to governing them, that they that can allow themselves to do the former, want only power, not will or inclination, to offer at the other too, which puts the matter out of doubt, that when men of this temper complain of such usurpation, it is not that they think it an offence in *itself*, but *against them* only ; and that no consciences ought to be free but *their own*. The proof of an honest and equal mind herein is—when we judge this to be *evil*, not being hurt by it, or abhor to hurt others in this kind, when we have power to do it ; upon which account that passage is memorable of the Emperor Maximilian II. to a certain prelate—that *there was no sin, no tyranny more grievous, than to affect dominion over men's consciences ; and that they who do so, go about to invade the tower of Heaven*—a con-

siderable saying from so great a prince, that lived and died in the *Roman communion*. What shall be thought of any such *Protestants*, that, without any colour, or shadow of a ground, besides differing from them in some very disputable and unimportant opinions, shall presume to *judge* of other men's consciences (consequently of their state God-wards) which such a one as *he* thought it so presumptuous wickedness to attempt to over-rule or govern? All are *for the truth*, and they are all for *peace and union*; by which some, indeed, more gently mean, they hope all will quit their former *mistaken opinions and ways* (as, in great kindness to themselves, they take for granted all men's are but their own) and come wholly over to them; others, that have not breasts capable of even so much charity as this, not only are as much lovers and admirers of themselves, but so vehement haters of all that presume to differ from them, that they think them not fit to live in the world that durst adventure to do so; the meaning, therefore, of their being for *peace* is, that they would have all destroyed that are not of their minds; and then, when they have made a *desolation*, so that they, themselves, are left alone in the world, that they will call *peace*.

How little any of us know, or are capable of knowing, in this our present state! that they that think they know most, or are most conceited of their own knowledge, *know nothing as they ought*

to know. That they that are most apt to contend, do, most of all, fight in the dark. That it is too possible there may be *much knowledge* without *love*. How little such knowledge is worth ! That it profits nothing. That it hurts, puffs up, when love edifies. That the devils know more than any of us ; while their want of love, or their hellish malignity, makes them devils. That as by pride comes contention, so humility would contribute more to *peace* (and to the discerning of *truth* too) than the most fervent disputation. But to close all, I pray, let us consider we are professedly going to heaven, that region of *light* and *life*, and *purity* and *love*. It well, indeed, becomes them that are upon the way thither, *moderately* to enquire after truth. Humble, serious, diligent endeavours to increase in divine knowledge are very suitable to our present state of darkness and imperfection. The product of such enquiries we shall carry to heaven with us. We shall carry truth and the knowledge of God to heaven with us. We shall carry purity thither, devotedness of soul to God and our Redeemer ; divine love and joy, if we have their beginnings here, with whatsoever else of real permanent excellency, that hath a settled fixed seat and place in our souls now, and shall there have them in perfection. But do we think we shall carry *strife* to heaven ? Shall we carry *anger* to heaven ? *Envyings*, *heart-burnings*, *animosities*, *enmities*, hatred of our bre-

thren and fellow Christians, shall we carry these to heaven with us? Let us labour to divest ourselves, and strike off from our spirits every thing that shall not go with us to heaven, or is equally unsuitable to our end and way, that there may be nothing to obstruct and hinder our abundant entrance, at length, into the *everlasting kingdom*.

Sermons on Religious Contention.

JEREMIAH WHITE*.

DIED 1707.

HOW strange and absurd a thing is *this*, if it were well considered—to see a good man one hour of the day upon his knees, bewailing to God his own ignorance, folly, and miscarriages, and in another hour of the day sitting in the judgment-seat with confidence and scorn, judging, censuring, and condemning his differing, mistaken, and fallen brother? And yet, how commonly is this to be found among us!

* A biographical account of Mr. Jeremiah White will be found in *Palmer's Non-conformist Memorial*. From his writings, and from the character he has left behind him, it appears that he was a man of considerable eminence and piety.

I think it no affront to any man's opinion to tell him, how fond soever he is of it now, that it *must die*. For all the truest and best notions we can have of spiritual truths and things here below, are to be done *away* when we arrive at that state above. So the Apostle expressly tells us; where having said *we know but in part, and prophesy but in part*; he adds, when that which is *perfect* is come, then that which is *in part* shall be *abolished*: we shall then lose all our present best notions and opinions of spiritual things; not in a blackness of darkness and death violently breaking in upon, and overspreading them, but in a brightness of unmixt and eternal light, arising upon them, and comprehending them in itself. They shall all then be blotted out, not as water quenches fire, but after such a manner as the beams of the sun do split it out, by drawing up the finer, and fiery parts, into themselves; they shall then be put out, not as a candle is by the extinguisher, but as the darkness and shadows of the night are swallowed up by the light of the morning; or rather, as the several colours of light in the first dawning of the day, are, afterwards, drunk up in the pure and perfect light of an increasing day. It is as yet but a morning light with the most enlightened souls here on earth. Thou art not yet so knowing, so good as thou shouldst be, if thou canst be satisfied with thyself, and thy present notions of things. Art

thou not waiting for Christ to touch thine eyes a *second* time? Dost thou not pray for his spirit to lead thee into all truths? Canst thou be content to lose thy share in the riches of that glory thou art yet a stranger to? And if thou thinkest that thou understandest all mysteries, and hast all knowledge, yet, sure I am, all that thou canst attain to here below, is but a *little part* of what is yet to come, and will be done away when that which is *perfect* appears. Why then dost thou lay so great a stress upon those opinions which thou hadst not the other day; which thou mayest lose to-morrow; and which are, finally, to be swallowed up? And why art thou so fond of them, to the prejudice of that *love* and *charity*, without which thou art, with all thy knowledge, *nothing*? Contend as much as thou wilt for what thou likest and believest to be the truth of God, and endeavour to suppress error; but let it be by such weapons as the gospel allows. Be as zealous as thou wilt for what thou callest truth; but take heed how thou puttest the authority, and stamp of God, upon thy own opinions; and how, in contending for them, thou lettest go *brotherly love*. Above all things, let us preserve ourselves from that *bitter zeal* which St. James speaks of, and upon which he sets so evil a mark, that he brands it with *the fire of hell*. If there be faith, he, *bitter envyings*. (but in the original we have it *bitter zeal*) this wisdom is not from above,

but *earthly, sensual, and devilish*. Let us take heed of suffering our zeal against the errors and miscarriages of our brother; to be mingled and tempered with a bitterness against his person; as lightning from heaven melts the sword, but doth no harm to the scabbard, let us in all our reproofs, discover an equal love to the person, and hatred to the evil—an equal desire to *destroy* the evil and *save* the person. Or let our zeal against the evil be nothing but love to the person, flaming forth, and burning with a great but with a sweet and divine force, that it may consume the dross for the gold's sake, to which the dross cleaves. That only is a *true zeal* which, like the fire from the golden altar, mingled with incense, fills all round about, and carries up that on which it feeds, as a sacrifice to heaven; with the richest odours and perfumes of a divine love. Let us suffer nothing to interrupt or stain this divine love, whose reasons being altogether divine, ought to subject all other reasons to themselves. And let us always remember how that *the measure which we mete to others, shall be measured to us again*.

Persuasive to Moderation.

JOHN GALE, D. D. *

DIED 1721.

TO what has a man a greater right, than to the entire free enjoyment and direction of his own conscience, and to a full power to act uprightly and in sincerity before God and man? And yet men are not by far, so much disturbed and wronged in any other possessions and enjoyments as in these. It is common to see men openly, not only justifying and pleading for, but acting their injuries of this kind sometimes by a law, and making a merit of them, and turning them into acts of religion; but to the very great prejudice and dishonour of the most holy religion they profess; which *neither knows, nor will ever excuse any such practices*. What is more common, than to see men assume to themselves that extravagant power, not given to any, to prescribe, to direct, and force the consciences of others, and rob them of their peace and purity, or else of their religious rights and privileges, by depriving

* Dr. Gale used to express more concern upon reflecting on the conduct of men, and the fearful consequences of their vices, than upon any other subject whatever.—*When I look upon men's behaviour* (said he) *I imagine eternity a thing to be trifled with—but when I look upon eternity, the behaviour of men astonishes me!*

Life of Gale in the Protestant Dissenter's Magazine.

them of that society and communion which they claim and desire, but cannot purchase at so dear a rate? All the difficulties and hardships, of every kind and in every degree, which are brought upon persons on the score of religion, come properly under the name of *persecution*; and are all equally founded in oppression, violence, and injustice. If it be lawful and just, arbitrarily to break in upon the religious rights and privileges of men, by the same reason, it will be equally lawful to break in upon all their civil rights and liberties, which are not more sacred, nor better guarded by God and nature; and, therefore, if it be good and just to rob men of their religious liberties, by imposing other terms of communion, demanding other professions of faith, and making other articles necessary to be believed than *Christ*, our only lawgiver, has done; then it is likewise lawful to rob them of their civil possessions and liberties, by incapacitating laws, by fines, dragoons, banishments, galleys, and imprisonments; and if all this be lawful for the honour of God and religion, and the good of men's souls, as is infamously pretended; it is likewise lawful, for the same good ends, to inflict all manner of corporal punishments, to exert the utmost rage, and fury, and barbarity, in devising racks and tortures, and all the most exquisite pains; and even to poison, stab, massacre, and give a general loose to all the execrable pas-

sions and violences of the most inhuman, relentless, and unmerciful robbers, assassins, and murderers. And in fact, men seem to have argued in this manner, and to have gone on as they have found themselves in power, from one degree of violence to another, till they have filled most parts of the world with blood and slaughter, and the most horrible devastations; and, if they may be believed, in pure love to men, and for the honour, security, and establishment of *the best, most holy, and peaceable religion of the Prince of Peace*. But after all, these things do, undoubtedly, the greatest dishonour and disservice to Christianity imaginable; even in the lowest degree; they breed the most inveterate enmity, dissension, and irreparable divisions and bloody persecutions among Christians; they expose religion to the contempt, and ridicule, and banter of atheists and infidels; and arm the heathen powers against a religion they see carries so much mischief and danger in its banners, and whets their rage and fury against those who, making a profession of it, seem to be the declared enemies of mankind.

Well, therefore, did the Apostle exhort the *Hebrews*, then actually under persecution, and too apt to dishonour their most holy profession; I say, well did the Apostle exhort them *to follow peace with all men, and holiness*; for all the evils and dreadful calamities we have been mentioning,

can be avoided no other way. And as we would have no part of that guilt lie heavy upon our own souls; and hinder our being admitted to see the Lord, may we all use our utmost diligence to observe the wholesome advice; and let us every one consider, carefully consider and examine our own selves; and study to follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which we are infallibly assured no man shall see the Lord. . . .

Sermons.

JAMES PIERCE,

EXETER.—DIED 1726*.

THE design of religion is practice; to make men good both in heart and life, zealous and sincere, conscientious and persevering in the discharge of every duty towards God and man. *And he that in these things serves Christ, is approved of God, and accepted of men.* God will never impute to the condemnation of mankind, the involuntary mistakes they are guilty of in matters of speculation, provided they have no bad

* This excellent divine, though dignified by no literary titles, was a man of profound learning, great talents, and unaffected piety. It has been justly said "that his works will sufficiently speak for him while there are any remains of piety, learning, and good sense, among the sons of Britain; and will follow him to those mansions where neither envy, malevolence, nor persecution, can deprive him of his reward."

influence upon their practice. I must profess I have been often ready to envy the happiness of those private Christians, who, not troubling themselves about matters of speculation, and not knowing the difficulties there are in them, go on easily and comfortably in the discharge of their whole duty, according to that light which God has given them. But here I lay the blame, when men will quarrel and censure each other about matters which, perhaps, none can pretend thoroughly to understand; and more especially I think those men are blame worthy, who make it their business to irritate and inflame such as are disposed to quietness and peace. As far as I can judge, they who are most confident of there being no difficulties in such points, are generally such as know the least of them, and such knowledge (as the Apostle says) *puffs up*; whereas a *little charity* mixed with *knowledge*, would make it more *edifying*. Where we see men's lives answerable to the Christian rule, let us learn not to judge one another. We are all the servants of Christ, and to him, as our common master, we must each of us either stand or fall.

Let others tamely give up their liberty if they please; but I do, and will insist upon it for myself, as a *Protestant*, a *Dissenter*, a *reasonable creature*, and a *Christian*. As I pretend not to impose upon others, so neither will I, in *this case*, be imposed upon by others. No king, no par-

liament, no church, no council, no synod, no man, or body of men, shall be acknowledged by me to have any such rightful authority over me. They may deprive me of my civil liberty, of my estate, or of my life; but *this liberty*, by the grace of God, they never shall deprive me of—to think and speak of God and religion, only in that manner which I apprehend they are spoken of in the holy scriptures by God himself.

A man may value himself upon the goodness of his *faith*, but there is yet a greater thing than this, even *charity*; and really Christians have much need of it in such quarrels, for as it will *cover a multitude of sins*, so there is, commonly, then a multitude that need covering. Let me then beseech you, for God's sake, for Christ's sake; let me entreat you, by the mercies of God, and the gentleness of Christ, as you have a regard to the peace of the church, the reputation of religion, and the success of the gospel, that you *put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, and gentleness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long suffering*; that you will *forbear one another in love*. Let your conversation be upon things on which all Christians agree, and beg of God to pour down a spirit of light, of love, and of peace upon us all, that we *may grow up in him who is the head in all things*.

Sermon on Charity.

JOHN EVANS, D. D.

DIED 1730.

WHEN we consider the power of prejudice, or readiness to make rash and hasty judgments; the plausible colours which may be put upon error; the indisposition of our minds in our fallen state, for the admission of divine truths; when we consider these things, we have reason in most judgments we form, to carry this cautionary thought along with us, that it is *possible* we may be *mistaken*. Who is there among us, who is not conscious to himself, that he hath actually been mistaken in many former judgments he hath made of things, even in some wherein once he was very positive? And certainly this is a good reason why we should carry the thought of our *fallibility* about with us in our future time. Those indeed who have made the deepest searches, and the most impartial enquiries in every age, hath discovered most mistakes in themselves, and, therefore, have justly entertained the most lively sense of the possibility of their being still mistaken in many things. Now humility in this view, would teach us; not indeed upon that account, to surrender ourselves to the absolute conduct and government of other men, who are *fallible* as well as we. To this the church of Rome would lead us, but in pretence of infallibility to rest ourselves upon; though they are neither

agreed among themselves where to place it, nor give us any proof from scripture, or their own conduct, that such a glorious gift is lodged with them. If any others would lead us to such an implicit faith in their dictates, while they disclaim infallibility, their claim is *still more absurd*. If our judgments be not so good, or our capacities not so enlarged as our neighbours, yet we are obliged to make the best of them, and *to judge for ourselves*. We must answer for ourselves to God, in the great day; and, therefore, it can neither be a laudable, or a safe humility, to take our religion from the dictates of any *fallible* man, or number of men.

Humility will incline us to make all *charitable* allowances for their failings and defects, when we are conscious of so many of our own—to censure them with gentleness, *to restore them in the spirit of meekness*, and not vauntingly to say to any, *stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou*. A lowly mind will consider even the worst of men, as such with whom we partake, in the same nature, the same sinful nature; who are bought with the same price as we; who have an offer of the same spiritual and eternal blessings, and are at least capable, by the same grace which hath made us to differ from them, of the same everlasting happiness.

Sermons on the Christian Temper.

EDMUND CALAMY, D. D.

DIED 1732.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in us, let us live peaceably with all men. Though some flight, and others insult us, yet let us be catholic spirited. Let us love all, without exception, that have any thing of *God* in them; any thing of the image of *Christ* upon them. Let us strive to return to the apostolical simplicity, and take care that our religion be that of the Bible. Whatever ye do, my brethren, take heed of narrowing your charity, and confining it within any humanly devised inclosures. Be content with your own liberty, and condemn not such as you differ from; but be ready, as far as the word and conscience will allow, to have communion with them, and with all the true *Christian churches* upon earth, in all Christian offices and duties. Manage your differences with modesty, carefully avoiding rash and intemperate zeal. Take heed of inflaming matters, by attempting to make the differences which there are between the *Church* and *Dissenters*, to appear greater than they are in reality, or the distance wider than it is. Endeavour after that latitude and enlargedness of mind, as may fit you for general and extensive service to the *Christian church*; and never forsake that *comprehensive* interest so far, as to be ingulphed into a party upon any private and distinct basis.

Let us, my brethren, take heed to ourselves, and instead of endlessly drawing the saw of contention, be much in prayer to Almighty God for the influences of his purifying, quickening, and healing spirit. Nothing can be more manifest, than that the church of Christ, at this day, is most sadly degenerated ; has long been in a very languishing state, and is become too like the rest of the world. The *great doctrines* of the Christian religion have lost their force, and are professedly believed but for fashion's sake ; while such as seem to entertain them, both are and practise, just as they would do if they believed them not. The primitive Christians were lively and vigorous. Heavenliness and spirituality sparkled in their profession and conversation. They looked like so many pieces of immortality dropped down from heaven, and tending thitherward.

Let us then beg of God with all possible earnestness, that there may be such a spirit of prayer and supplication stirring among us, as may bring down upon us all manner of spiritual blessings in a rich abundance ; and such an *uniting* spirit, as may effectually check our animosities and divisions, and heal our breaches ; and such a spirit of *love* and *peace*, as may make us, like the first Christians—of *one heart and one soul*.

Dedication of the Account of ejected Ministers.

late the one and *adorn* the other. And the more solicitous they were about this, the less concerned would they be for the differences between them and other good Christians, in things disputable; and less apt to give any countenance to persons whose lives were a disgrace to their profession, only for the sake of their holding the same opinions. It is really a melancholy consideration, that while all sides are wrangling about articles of faith, and modes and ceremonies of worship, they should so generally forget that which is of the greatest consequence of all—a *strict* and *humble* piety, and a diffusive *benevolence* and *charity*.

Sermons.

JOHN ABERNETHY, A. M.

DUBLIN.—DIED 1740.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ, himself, hath instituted a society of a peculiar nature; a kingdom, which he saith *is not of this world*, different from all others that ever have been in the world; formed for different purposes, and governed by different maxims. In this society it is his will that there should be *peace*; having laid a glorious foundation for it in that one faith and religion he hath taught his followers, and even the external form of their profession, and having united them in the hope of a future bless-

fed immortality, and in the relation of children to God as their common Father, and having made them fellow members of one body of which himself is the head, and given them his spirit to instruct and direct them, he enjoined them *to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* St. Paul teacheth us that *peace* is of the very essence of this celestial kingdom, the main privileges of its true subjects depending upon it, and it being their indisputable duty to preserve and promote it; *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink* (Christianity doth not consist in external observances, which are often the subjects of contention) *but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

We should, indeed, judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who bath will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God. The praise which is justly due to his own works, according to the favourable rule of proceeding which he has declared in his word. How happy would it be for the world, the Christian world particularly, if this rule were universally followed! What divisions and discords, strifes and confusions, would it prevent, and the great guilt of rash and uncharitable censures? This is a matter of so great importance, that our Saviour has thought fit to insist much upon it, particularly in his sermon upon the

mount, and enforce it by strong arguments: *Judge not that ye be not judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* It is a point of such consequence, that God will have a great regard to it in judgment, and in the distribution of rewards and punishments; such as treat their brethren with candour and tenderness, shall meet with great clemency from him; but such as have shewed no mercy to others, may expect a more severe doom. In short, the evil we are here warned against is *uncharitableness*, an immediate violation of God's royal law, which when it is fulfilled completes a truly good and christian character. *Charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself, becometh not unseemly; it hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things; it suffereth long, and is kind; it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* How unlike this is the spirit of a great many zealous Christians, who carry it with contempt and wrath towards their brethren; who, perhaps, are really weak, but reputed perversely erroneous; condemned as obstinate, when it may be in truth, and in the judgment of God, more sincere, impartial, and unprejudiced, than we who take upon us to judge? Let even those who oppose the most important, the most evident and necessary truth, be instructed with meekness; let such as are differently minded from us in more difficult and less important points, *be received not to doubtful disputations*; above all, let the spirit of

jealousy find no room in our hearts ; let us not take upon us to impute to any of our fellow Christians, selfish corrupt views and sinister designs, which they disclaim, or give no sufficient ground for fixing upon them—that is really judging the heart, whereby we invade the prerogative of God, as well as injure men.

Sermons.

DANIEL NEAL, A. M.

DIED 1743.

WE have a fervent zeal for the honour of our Lord and Master, and are desirous to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, with all sorts of spiritual weapons ; but we do not yet see a necessity of stopping the mouths of the adversaries of our holy religion with fines and imprisonments, even though, to their own infamy and shame, they treat it with indecency. Let scandal and ill-manners be punished as it deserves, but let not men be terrified from speaking out their doubts, or proposing their objections against the gospel revelation, which we are sure will bear a thorough examination ; and though the late ungenerous attacks upon the miracles of our blessed Saviour, may have had an ill-influence upon the giddy and unthinking youth of the age, they have given

occasion to the publishing such a number of incomparable defences of Christianity, as have confirmed the faith of many, and must satisfy the minds of all *reasonable* enquirers after truth.

I have said nothing with a design to exasperate or widen the differences among Christians; for as I am a sincere admirer of the doctrines of the New Testament, I would have an equal regard to its most excellent precepts, of which *these* are some of the capital—that *we love one another; that we forgive offences; that we bear one another's infirmities, and even bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.* If *this* spirit and temper were more prevalent, the lives of Christians would throw a bright lustre upon the truth and excellency of this divine faith, and convince the *atheists* and *infidels* of the age, more than all their arguments can do without it.

I would earnestly recommend *this* temper to the *Protestant non-conformists* of the present age, together with an holy emulation of each other, in undissembled piety and sanctity of life, that while they are reading the heavy and grievous sufferings of their ancestors from *ecclesiastical commissions, spiritual courts, and penal laws, for conscience sake*, they may be excited to an humble adoration of divine Providence, which has delivered them so far from the yoke of oppression, and to a detestation of all persecuting principles. And

may Protestants of all persuasions improve in the knowledge and love of the truth, and in sentiments of *Christian charity* and *forbearance* towards each other, that being at *peace* among themselves, they may with greater success, bend their *united* forces against the *common* enemy of Christianity!

Preface to the History of the Puritans:

GEORGE SMITH, A. M.

DIED 1746*.

WHEN Zeal is under certain regulations, I don't know any character in the world more *lovely* than that of a *zealous man*. It is, in short *this*—which the more narrowly we view it the better we shall like it.

He is one who, by serious enquiry, has arrived at a competent acquaintance with those truths which it is of most importance to know, and of

* Mr. G. Smith officiated to a society at Hackney for thirty years as a preacher, excelled by none, and equalled by few. He was looked upon by his own brethren, as holding the first rank in merit amongst them, and not less honoured and valued by those of the establishment, who knew him. — *Toulmin's Life of Neal*. The Rev. Dr. Toulmin will be pleased to accept my thanks for the curious and interesting particulars which he has communicated in the notes to that publication, respecting many valuable deceased ministers among the Protestant Dissenters.

those duties which are most necessary to be practised. And as he sees how perfectly agreeable the former are to the understanding of a reasonable creature, and how fit it is that those who are endowed with reason, and are designed for a social life, should practise the latter; so he has a settled propensity, a warm desire to propagate both the one and the other among mankind, and to improve himself, especially, in both. This his zeal arises not from any corrupt bias on his will, or any selfish purposes that are to be answered by it, but from a rational conviction that nothing is so beautiful and amiable as *truth* and *virtue*; and from a sincere desire to promote the honour of God, and the happiness of mankind. He is one, who as he knows, that though all truth is equally true; yet that it is not all of equal importance, nor every real duty of equal necessity; so he proportions his zeal to the nature and moment of things, being less concerned about matters of comparatively little weight, and more so about greater. He is one who, amidst all his zeal, remembers that he is a *man*, subject to passions and mistakes as well as his neighbours; and, therefore, he never grows haughty and assuming, insolent and domineering, but is full of love and good-will to all mankind, even to those who differ most widely from him; and who, therefore, dares not under any pretence whatsoever, violate the laws of charity, nor break in upon any rights, to which all men have

an equal claim. He is one who, though he spares no pains in informing the ignorant, convincing the erroneous, reproving the bold sinner, and reforming the debauchee, yet never allows himself to censure rashly, to slander, oppress, or injure any man in any kind, and much less on account of religion, or matters of conscience. Finally, he is one who, though he is very earnest and diligent in this work, yet goes about it with prudence, and manages it with caution and discretion.

Such is the character of the man whose *zeal* God approves, and all wise and good men applaud. Such a man can scarce be supposed ever to do any mischief in the world—he can scarce fail of being remarkably beneficial to it. And as ugly an appearance as *zeal* sometimes makes, big with the mischiefs and ruin which it has too often produced—thus *honestly* a figure, would it make, under *these* regulations.

Sermon on religious Zeal.

ISAAC WATTS, D. D.

DIED 1748.

AN uncharitable man wounds the very vitals of that religion by which he hopes for eternal life. And whilst his fury rages against his brother for

* Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his life of *Watts*, makes the following observation, which perfectly accords with the

accidental differences, he shakes the very foundations of his own christianity, and endangers, or prevents his own salvation; his boasted orthodoxy in opinion is made vain, while his practical ungodlinesses are real; and his faith appears to be little better than that of devils, when he mingles so much of their malice with it. In vain does he glory in the brightness of his notions: in vain does he presume *darkness is past and the true light now shineth: for he that sayeth he is in the light and hateth his brother, he abideth in darkness even till now.*

It is true, indeed, that all graces and virtues are very imperfect in this present state, and there is much of uncharitableness remaining in many a good man: but that man can never be good that has no charity. *Zelus* has spent his life in declaiming against some little modes and gestures used in worship by his fellow Christians, or in imposing some uninstituted ceremonies on the consciences of his brethren. He hath stirred up the magistrate to persecute some of them to prisons, and almost to death. He flattered his conscience with hopes that his zeal for the church should not only render him acceptable at the last day, but provide him a large reward. He lies

above testimony. "With his *theological* works, I am only enough acquainted to admire his meekness of opposition and his mildness of censure. It was not only in his book but in his mind, that orthodoxy was united with charity."

now languishing upon a bed of sickness on the very borders of eternity, and is terribly awakened to behold his own mistake; whilst he stands within the tribunal of *Christ*, and the face of the judge, his former practice appears to his conscience in its true and frightful shape; the fire that hath animated him against his brethren now flashes in his soul and discovers its infernal source; now he dreads to be made an example of the same vengeance among devils, with which he hath pursued his fellow mortals; he groans out his last breath in bitter agonies, cries to the God of Love for mercy upon his departing spirit, and expires almost without hope. He is gone. But we leave his soul to the compassion of a God who can better pardon his mighty errors, than he would forgive others in their little mistakes.

Thus dreadfully hath this vice of uncharitableness prevailed against the honour of Christianity and the peace of mankind. Thus sacrilegiously hath it taken away one of the brightest marks of the best religion, and that is *love*. It hath defaced the beauty of our holy profession, scandalised the sacred name that we bear, made a slaughter-house of the church of *Christ*, and deceived the souls of men to their own eternal ruin.

Just as I had finished this essay, *Pharissaino* happened to come into my study, and taking up the first leaf, read the title, and was persuaded this discourse must be written against himself. "No,

said I, there is not any man alive personally intended in these papers; but if you please to peruse them, and shall apply the characters to yourself, I hope you will confess Divine Providence has led you into a conviction of your false zeal." *Phariseino* sat him down immediately, and with a running eye passed through every page. And though the frequent wrinkle of his brow discovered his inward chagrin and disgust, yet he paid me many a ceremony; and, "Behold," said he, "how language and fancy will dress up zeal like a monster to frighten men out of their fervor of spirit.

"I have heard," added he, "that you have some skill in painting; pray draw me the figure of this uncharitableness in just and proper colours; this monster which you complain has so narrowed and disgraced, and murdered Christianity." I will attempt it, *Phariseino*, if you will furnish me with a sheet of large paper, and that of the fairest kind, to represent the Christian church in this world. First, I will pare it round, and reduce it to a very small compass; then with much ink will I stain the whiteness of it, and deform it with many a blot; at the next sitting I will stab it through rudely with an iron pen; and when I put the last hand to complete the likeness—it shall be smeared over with blood!

Orthodoxy and Charity united.

JAMES FOSTER, D. D.

DIED 1753.

TO agree in *opinion* is entirely out of our power; to *profess alike*, whilst we believe differently; is *base* and *dishonest*, and destructive of the most sacred obligations, and upon that account ought never to be the matter of our choice. So that neither of these can be any part of that unity which we are bound to cultivate as a religious and moral duty; but the whole sum of it must be resolved into this, that condescension, mutual forbearance, and an harmony of mild benevolent affections, supply the place of that uniformity of faith and profession, which are morally speaking *impossible*.

When the professors of our most holy and excellent religion are imperious and domineering, and foment cruel and unnatural divisions; when they break the *one body of Christ*, and multiply it into little *cabals*, reviling and disclaiming all relation to each other; when they are *contentious*, and, without thinking of charity and moderation, engage in violent disputes about the holiness of days, and gestures, and garments, and crossings, or the *orthodoxy* of sounds that have no determinate meaning, or the several ways of explaining what is allowed to be inexplicable; and instead of humility and peace, gentleness, and simplicity of manners; the real characters of corrupt

and degenerate Christians are haughtiness, impatience of contradiction, and an implacable stubborn spirit: the cause of Christianity is more dangerously wounded by such excesses as these, than by all the art and arguments of its most ingenious and subtle opposers;— and notwithstanding its truth and divinity, *infidels* will load it with contempt; nor indeed can it be expected to *flourish* and gain profelytes, while it is thus dishonoured and betrayed by its pretended friends. Add to this, that divisions and animosities obstruct the increase of Christian knowledge, by infusing strong prejudices, by inflaming the passions, and darkening the understanding, and by withdrawing the attention from the essential doctrines of the gospel, and fixing it on those minute and trifling points, which are generally the subjects of most furious and scandalous debates. No less fatal are they to the *Christian virtues* of righteousness, long suffering, meekness, fidelity, and goodness, which are all obliterated and effaced in proportion to the increase of discord and variance. Strife and faction are, therefore condemned in the New Testament in the severest terms, because of their manifest *contrariety* to true religion, and the Christian character, and their dreadful and destructive consequences. And, on the contrary, the strictest unity and most affectionate regard for each other are frequently and earnestly recommended. We are exhorted to *follow after the*

things which make for peace, to put away evil speaking, wrath, anger, clamour, and malice. And the Apostle Paul, with the most beautiful and pathetic tenderness, intreated the Philippians, if there was any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any fellowship of the spirit to be like minded, having the same law (i. e. reciprocal and universal charity) being of one accord and of one mind; and the Colossians to put on (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. He reproved the Corinthians for their contentious principles with great sharpness and severity, in the following passage: Whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephias or Peter, and I of Christ; are ye not carnal? Is CHRIST divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? And in another of his epistles he enjoins it on the Christian brethren to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, because there is one body and one spirit even as they were called in one hope of their calling.

This is the glorious spirit, this the divine temper of the Christian religion, strongly inculcated and brightly exemplified by the first preachers of it.

And if the time should ever come, when not only the *members of particular churches*, but *whole Christian societies*, shall live in this amiable and blessed concord one with another; nay, when by a more extensive benevolence and harmony than this, *all mankind* shall be *united*, in the bonds of an undissembled and generous *friendship*, not merely upon the consideration of their dwelling together in neighbourhoods and lesser societies; but as parts of the universal community: this will be the strongest and most transporting resemblance of which we can at present form any idea of the future life, in which *social affections* will be exerted, and *social pleasures* enjoyed, in their utmost purity and perfection.

Discourses on Social Virtue.

JOHN TAYLOR, D. D.

NORWICH.—DIED 1761.

TO what purpose is our boasted liberty, if we dare not use it? To what purpose do we enjoy the light, if we may not open our eyes to it? To what purpose is the word of God, if we must not seek for its *real* and *genuine* sense, but must be tied to the dictates and sentiments of any divines that have been, or now are? How can we, without the grossest inconsistency, pray in our public

public assemblies, *that the reformation may be carried on to still greater degrees of perfection*, if in our practice we defeat the very blessing we desire? What advantage hath the Dissenter, if not to reform without the formalities and delays of human laws and edicts, whatever shall be discovered to be at any time, or in any respect, wrong in his scheme? Why doth he reject human impositions in one way, if he tamely submits to them in another? Our forefathers rejected what they thought was of human invention, and what we find to be so, that escaped them, we, upon their principles, are to reject; otherwise we only exchange one kind of bondage for another, and while we refuse establishments by law, we shall come under the no less grievous establishments of custom. And if this spirit is let loose among us, what ravages will it make in congregations? What fires will it kindle? What animosities, contentions, and divisions will it make? How will it lay waste peace and love, and brotherly kindness, the grand virtues of the gospel; go on to spread deism, and make Christianity, through the false principles and inhuman practices of Christians, the scorn and detestation of the world? Thus the very men who profess great zeal for reviving the power of religion, will be found the greatest obstructors of it. How different from this, how amiable, happy, and honourable, is the spirit of the gospel? peace, love, meekness, gentleness, good-

ness, mutual forbearance, candid allowance for infirmity and mistake ; an honest endeavour to promote knowledge, impartial study, and search of the scriptures—free communication, and ready admittance of what is found in them ! These are the virtues which make us truly Christians ; thus we shall grow up into Christ in all things ; thus our hearts, and in time our heads too, will be united, as far as the present state of things will admit ; thus religion will flourish, and shine with a charming lustre in the eyes of the world !

And when, O when will the glorious day shine upon our world ; when meekness, forbearance, charity, and brotherly kindness, shall flourish among Christians ! when, setting aside all party-schemes and odious distinctions, all selfish views, all worldly emoluments, all pride and bigotry, all prejudice and prepossession, all envy, wrath, and bitterness, we shall receive one another upon the true scriptural terms of Christian communion ; that with one heart and with one mouth, we may all glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ? When shall we see the error and mischief of that detestable principle, *that difference of judgment in finding out the true sense of the scripture, strips a man of his Christian character, and giveth us a right to abuse him ?* When will the happy state of things be created, wherein the *witnesses* of our Lord Jesus Christ, who honestly endeavour to vindicate the truth as it is

in him, shall no longer *prophecy, clothed in sack-cloth*, under the heavy burden of unrighteous censure and insult? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Defence of the Rights of Christians.

JAMES DUCHAL, D. D.

DUBLIN—DIED 1761.

WHAT if there have been debates about many particulars, such as the decrees of God, the divine agency upon the minds of men (which, however, are not debates peculiar to Christianity) about the person and offices of our blessed Saviour, in some things less connected with vital religion, and many other matters, about which men have disputed with too much warmth; so that indeed the *true Christian spirit* hath been in a great measure lost in the tumults they have raised? Must we therefore imagine, that an *honest* enquirer cannot find out the *true design of the religion of Christ*, and the way of serving it effectually? Can he not discern what is the true end of life, and supreme good of the human mind? Hath he not a clear view of his duty to God, to his neighbour, and to himself, with the addition of the duty we owe to the Son of God, as appointed by the Father to be the only Mediator between him and mankind; to whom the utmost gratitude for what he hath done and suffered for us,

and an unreserved obedience, is due? Can he not see that God, as moral governor of the world, is attentive to the temper and conduct of every individual; and that he will bring him into judgment for it, rewarding the sincerely obedient, and punishing the rebellious and impenitent? Can he not see express declarations, that upon sincere repentance for sin, and a cordial submission to the gospel, he shall be taken into the divine favour and protection; shall have all necessary encouragement and assistance in the performance of his duty, and that God will always take care of him, and order what concerneth him in the best manner? Can he not see most joyful assurance of a glorious immortality in reserve for the righteous, of which our Saviour's triumph over death is the blessed pledge; and that he shall be happy in the heavenly state, happy to his wish, and beyond all that he can at present imagine? And if an honest attentive reader is fully instructed in all this by the *New Testament*, what more could a wise man wish?

It is not necessary that men should enter into *perplexing controversies*, or disquiet their minds about matters in which they see they cannot be competent judges. The way to salvation is *plain and easy*. To attain to the knowledge of this, a well disposed mind, a sincere heart, are the main requisites; whereas great penetration and skill in controversies are not necessary. Christianity is

intended to be the religion of *all*, and is, therefore, within the reach of common capacity. And we are not to attend to what controversies the prejudices and corrupt lusts, or the weakness or folly of mankind have occasioned ; but what a man of plain understanding and an honest heart may attain to, by a *careful perusal* of his bible.

*Presumptive Arguments for the
Christian Religion.*

GEORGE BENSON, D. D.

DIED 1763.

IT is now above two hundred years since the commencement of the reformation. Is it not then a shame, and a reproach to Protestants of all denominations, that there should yet be among them any pretences to infallibility, or any remains of bigotry and persecution; the very worst part of popery? That the free, noble, and generous spirit of benevolence and liberty, has not yet had an universal spread among them, and rooted out the spirit of persecution and uncharitableness in all the kinds and degrees thereof? If such a spirit and temper were diffused among us and prevailed, the more sober and considerate enemies of Revelation would be more ready to harken to what we have to say. And as to the body of them, who have never read the bible through,

with any tolerable care and attention, who wish Christianity may be false, because it is convenient for them it should be so, inasmuch as it condemns their vices, and threatens with a righteous judgment to come, and a terrible hereafter:—when we had gained the more virtuous and judicious, such loose and abandoned persons would either be put out of countenance, as having nothing plausible to say in their own vindication; or they would shew mankind *that they are against revelation, purely because revelation is against them.*

At a time when all *religion* is so boldly struck at, we ought not to load *religion* with the pretended power and authority of any man, or number of men. We ought to content ourselves with being *Christians*, and not list ourselves into a *party*, and glory in the name of particular *heads* and *leaders*. *One alone is our master*, our head, and our Lord—*Jesus Christ*; and we should glory in *his name* only—we should take our *religion* from his word, and make that the *sole standard*. Then should we bring about the most glorious reformation indeed! not by burning *heretics* (that is, persons who differ from us no more than we differ from them) not by hunting down those whom we cannot convince, but by the force of evidence and in the spirit of love and meekness; by kind treatment, invincible arguments, and inoffensive, holy, and exemplary lives. Then would the glorious spirit of

liberty and charity flow in every vein, and beat in every pulse—the most godlike benevolence warm every heart, and influence every action. Then would *the salvation of God be nigh unto them that fear him, and glory dwell in our land ! mercy and truth would meet together : righteousness and peace embrace each other ! Truth would spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven !*

This is a reformation devoutly to be wished for by every humane and virtuous man ! *A spectacle which God might look down upon with pleasure !* A reformation which would bring glory to God on high, peace on earth, and the most extensive benevolence among men ! God grant that it may be effected and take place speedily ! not only in our happy island, but over the face of the whole globe ! and may every creature in heaven and on earth, with one unanimous applauding voice, say, *even so—Amen.*

A Defence of the Account of Servetus.

JOHN LELAND, D. D.

DUBLIN.—DIED 1766.

AFTER all the clamour that has been raised about differences among Christians, as to the sense of scripture, there are many things of great importance, about which there hath been,

in all ages, a very general agreement among professed Christians. They are agreed, that there is one God who made heaven and earth, and all things which are therein: that he preserveth all things by the word of his power, and governeth all things by his providence: that he is infinitely powerful, wise, and good, and is to be loved, feared, adored, and obeyed above all: that as there is one God, so there is one Mediator between God and man, *Jesus Christ the righteous*, whom he, in his infinite love and mercy, sent into the world to save and redeem us: that he came to instruct us by his doctrine, and bring a clear revelation of the divine will, and to set before us a bright and most perfect example for our imitation: that he submitted to the most grievous sufferings, and to death itself, for our sakes, that he might obtain eternal redemption for us: that he rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven, and is now crowned with glory and honour, and even liveth to make intercession for us: that through him, and in his name, we are to offer up our prayers, and ~~hope~~ for the acceptance of our persons and services, and for gracious assistance in the performance of our duty: that in him there is a new covenant established and published to the world, in which there is a free and universal offer of pardon and mercy to all the truly penitent, and a most express promise of eternal life, as the reward of our sincere, though

imperfect obedience: that it is not enough to have a bare speculative faith, but we must be formed into a holy and godlike temper; and in order to be prepared for that future happiness, must *live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*: that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, and a future judgment; when Christ shall judge the world in the Father's name, and give to every man according to his deeds: that the wicked shall be doomed to the most grievous punishments, and the righteous shall be unspeakably happy to all eternity.

These are things of great consequence, and which have been generally acknowledged by Christians in all ages. And if there have been several things advanced by those who call themselves Christians, which are not well consistent with these generally acknowledged principles; if there have been controversies among them about points of considerable importance, as well as many contentions about things of little or no moment, this is no argument against the divine authority, or usefulness of the sacred writings. Those that *wrest the scriptures* must be accountable to him who gave them, for that perversion and abuse, as men must be accountable for the abuse of reason; but this is far from proving that, therefore, the scriptures answer no valuable purpose, and could not be of divine original.

Still it is true, that whosoever will with a

teachable and attentive mind, and an upright attention to know and do the will of God, apply himself to read and consider the holy scriptures in an humble dependance on God's gracious assistance, will find vast advantage for instructing him in the knowledge of religion, and engaging him to the practice of it; and for guiding him in the way of salvation.

May God awaken the *true genuine spirit* of Christianity, which suffers very much from the looseness and libertinism of some, and from the too great *narrowness* of others.

*View of the Deistical Writers, and
Letter to Doddridge.*

SAMUEL CHANDLER, D. D. F. R. S.

DIED.—1766.

CHARITY is truly *the end of the commandment*, as it is the great intention of all the precepts of righteousness to promote it, and as there can be no defect in, or deviation from, any social duties, or moral duties, where *charity* forms the temper and influences the conduct. It never deigns to dwell but where it finds, or creates a *pure heart*; it is the perpetual companion of a *good conscience*, makes its voice soft and pleasing, and fills it with satisfactions celestial in their na-

ture, and which are preparative for, and the earnest of, joys fully complete, uninterrupted, and eternal.

Whatever *end* we can imagine the COMMANDS of REVELATION to have, we shall find they are most powerfully and effectually answered by the prevalence of this *charity*, or under the sacred and propitious influence of love to God and our neighbour. Do they aim at the *honour of God*, the supreme Lord and Governor of the world? He who loves him must be desirous of promoting it, and doing whatever he doth to his glory; and if he loves his neighbour as himself, in obedience to, and imitation of God, he will demonstrate the sincerity of it by such an habitual behaviour towards him in all the instances of undissembled friendship and goodness, as shall be a full proof of the *prevailing regards* he pays to the *divine authority*, and his sincere desire of promoting that kingdom of God which consists in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Is the *end* of the Christian command to advance the interest of Christ in the world, and to render him precious and glorious in the esteem of mankind? As he was born, and came into the world to do his Father's work, carry on the great purposes of his mercy, and promote the happiness and salvation of mankind; how can we better show our regard for him, or recommend his re-

ligion with more advantage to others, than by loving God as he did, and imitating him in his *friendship, affection, and kindness to mankind?* Doth the commandment aim at the perfection of human nature, and the creating men into a divine nature and resemblance? Remember, Christian, *God is love, and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him,* and thus bears his image in the most amiable and attractive perfection of his nature. Is one great intention of the *Christian* command, *peace on earth,* and to promote *good-will amongst men,* and hereby to advance the welfare and happiness of society; the love of God and our neighbour, prevailing in all its genuine fruits and effects, will effectually remove every cause of public discord, *uneasiness,* and misery, unite men to God, and cement them together in their endeavours to promote the happiness of each other, and the public safety and prosperity. And, finally, is the end of the *Christian* commandment to *prepare men for,* and secure them the possession of, *eternal life and blessedness?* What ingredient can he want to self-enjoyment, and the happiness of the present state, in whose breast *benevolence* and *fervent affection* dwell? How well prepared is he who loves God, for the heavenly felicity which arises from the perfection and perpetuity of this love? How fit for the enjoyment of the best of beings, who himself resembles him in goodness? How ripe for the society of those friendly beings,

the angels of God and the perfected saints of Christ, whose heart is purified from all malevolent dispositions, fitted for the services and pleasures of friendship, and prepared for all those sacred and exalted satisfactions, that must be enjoyed in that happy world, where eternal harmony reigns amongst all the blessed inhabitants, where the foul spirit of *jealousy*, *discontent*, and *envy* never enters to defile or trouble, where all hearts are inflamed with *the love of God*, united by fervent *affection* to each other, each is happy in himself, and continually heightening his own happiness, by promoting that of others, and *the love of God* to all is the eternal source from whence they derive *joys unspeakable and full of glory*. Cherish, therefore, this *god-like temper*, as you encrease in it, you will grow more meet for the happiness of heaven. That blessed world will at last receive you, and *the God of love* will complete and perpetuate your felicity.

Sermon on the importance of Charity.

NATHANIEL LARDNER, D. D.

DIED 1768*.

A BRANCH of moderation towards such as differ from us, is mildness and gentleness in all debates and arguments for the truth of our re-

* Dr. Lardner, when he had written a great part of his celebrated work, entitled *the Credibility of the Gospel*

ligion: which we find recommended in the writings of Christ's Apostles. Says St. Peter: *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* That direction seems to be addressed to Christians in general. St. Paul speaking more especially of those who were in the ministerial office, says: *And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.*

Whether it be any just ground of offence, that others differ from us or not; yet men are apt too often to take it amiss, that others differ from them, and yield not to the force of those arguments which convince and satisfy themselves. It is, therefore, a branch of mildness, and very laudable, to bear patiently with those who differ from us in point of religion, and calmly to propose our best arguments, and be willing to

History, which consisted of 17 octavo volumes, made the following memorable declaration, "I have lately published the seventh volume of the second part of the credibility; but a temper and conduct worthy the doctrine of the gospel, are more valuable than any written defences and apologies for it, or explications of it. I beg that I may be more and more possessed of that temper of *humility and meekness*, which shall bear good fruits."

Kippis' Life of Lardner.

renew those methods of conviction, which hitherto have been ineffectual.

Christians have the most forcible arguments and inducements, and the best assistances of any men, for the practice of moderation, mildness, and equity. Forasmuch as they have had experience of the mercies of God and Christ Jesus in forgiving them, and showing towards them great mildness, tenderness, and equity. They have also been taught to love one another, and all men, so as no other men have been taught, and the principles of love will mightily dispose to mildness and gentleness, for *love suffereth long and is kind; it is not easily provoked, is not puffed up; it beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; moreover they know and expect the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his work.* We may reasonably conclude, that mildness, or moderation, or equity among Christians, will be to the honour of their religion, otherwise certainly the apostle had not directed Christians to *let their moderation be known to all men.* Some might possibly be apt to think, that rigour, harshness and severity, might be more useful than moderation and mildness. But since mildness towards men is not an approbation of any thing that is wrong, and men may be differently treated according to their different conduct, moderation, or mildness, will not be hurtful but advantageous.

And, indeed, we may be assured, that *moderation* or *mildness* is a *great* virtue; it being often commanded and enforced, under many other words, in the writings of the apostles. For *the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness*. And St. James says, *The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*.

Sermon on Christian Moderation.

JOB ORTON,

SHREWSBURY.—DIED 1783.

PERSONS chargeable with seeking their own things more than those of Christ, are they who are more zealous for those particular modes of faith and forms of worship, which distinguish themselves and their own party, than for the acknowledged essentials of Christian truth and duty. I choose to mention this character distinctly, because this kind of zeal is often mistaken for zeal in the cause of Christ, and commended as such, though it is most foreign from it and opposite to it. This St. Paul hath expressly determined, when he tells the Corinthians, *While one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?* Whereas there is among you *envying and strife, and divisions*, about particular persons, whom ye set up as heads of parties, *are ye not carnal,*

and walk as men ; as your ungenerate heathen neighbours ? We see instances of this spirit frequently, and almost in every place. We meet with many who have, as St. Paul observes concerning the Jews, a zeal for God ; but not according to *knowledge*. It is neither well directed, nor well founded : Some persons are warm and eager in defending and propagating their own sentiments on controversial points : they censure and condemn all who do not hold those, and call them by some hard and opprobrious names : nor do they always spare those of the same sentiments with themselves, if they are not equally zealous for them. They esteem all those to be pious and godly who are in their *own* way of thinking, though some of them trample upon common probity and fidelity, and discover much conceit, bitterness, and ill-temper ; while they entertain an unfavourable opinion of all others, be their characters ever so unblameable, and their lives useful.

Consider how zealous many good men are for little things, for *important nothings*. It may truly be said of some objects of their zeal, that they are *not* the things of Christ—of others, that they are the *least* of his things—of little value and weight in his religion. What zeal do they shew for particular phrases, forms, and ceremonies, for human standards and traditions, and for party distinctions ! What zeal for doctrines

confessedly mysterious and unintelligible, and about which wise and good men in every age have differed; and which, therefore, undoubtedly are not essential to religion and salvation! What zeal and pains to be at the head of a party, or considerable in it; or to make profelytes to it! While there hath been very little zeal for the *indisputables*, for holiness and usefulness of life, and conformity to the rules of the gospel. How violent, fiery, and bitter, hath the former zeal been; and what dreadful effects hath it produced in the church! But how little is seen of that *wisdom which is from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

Discourses on Zeal.

PHILIP FURNEAUX, D. D.

CLAPHAM.—DIED 1783.

ABOVE all, the nature and design of the system of *revealed truth* should be carefully studied and thoroughly understood. Regard it not as a magazine of uncertain or speculative opinions, or of entertaining problems; but as containing truths of the clearest evidence, and the utmost importance, relating to the perfections, providence, government, purposes, and will of God; to the nature and con-

dition of man, his present duty, his future prospects; in a word, to the scheme of redemption and salvation, through the infinite mercy of the Father, and by the life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of his incarnate Son. Are there, or can there be subjects of greater importance than these to sinful men? And *the lively oracles* in which these interesting events and doctrines are recorded, are an infallible test of truth; all others are to be tried by them; they by none.

Remember that you not only *set out*, but *proceed* in the name of *Jesus*. For you receive not your commission from Socrates, or Plato; or Cicero, or Seneca; from Luther or Calvin, Arminius or Baxter, or from any other great men, ancient or modern, (through an excessive and injudicious regard to whose reputation or authority, *the Christian church* hath been unhappily rent into a thousand different contending parties) but solely from *Jesus Christ*. Take heed, therefore, that you *preach him the only Lord, and yourselves servants of the churches for his sake*.

When various factions arose amongst the Corinthians, and one boasted, *I am of Paul*; another, *I of Cephas or Peter, and I of Christ*; the apostle put to them these pertinent and poignant interrogatories, *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* It should, therefore, sirs, be your prin-

cipal care to keep your eye on your commis-
 sion, and on your master, and to direct men's
 regard to him, as the only head in his church,
 and the only sovereign in his kingdom; as well
 as our only Saviour and guide to heaven. Set
 on foot and promote no private or party schemes;
 no interest of your own or others in derogation
 of, much less in opposition to his. Let it
 be your constant aim and ambition to render men
 loyal and faithful subjects to that *King whom*
God hath set on his holy hill of Zion. Maintain
 and cultivate peace, *charity, and unity,* with all
 those who love our *Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;*
 however they may differ from one another, or
 from you in religious opinions or modes of wor-
 ship. *Meekness and humility* are the peculiar or-
 naments of a *Christian,* especially of a *minister,* as
 nothing can be more indecent in him than
 haughtiness and pride. *Put on, therefore, as the*
elect of God, holy and beloved, meekness, long suf-
fering and humbleness of mind, as well as bowels of
mercies and kindness; and above all, put on Charity,
which is the bond of perfection.

Charge to Ministers at Bridport.

RICHARD PRICE, D.D. F.R.S.

DIED 1791.

IT has been said, that if *Christianity* came from God, it would have been taught the world with such clearness and precision, as not to leave room for doubts and disputes. It is wonderful to me, that any person can mention *this* who believes the doctrines of natural religion, or who has read the defences of Christianity. Has the Author of nature given us reason in this manner, or even the information we derive from our senses? Is it possible, while we continue such creatures as we are, that any instruction should be so clear as to preclude disputes? Supposing the Deity to grant us supernatural light, are we judges what degree of it he ought to give, or in what particular manner it ought to be communicated?

Again: The animosities, persecutions, and bloodshed, which the Christian religion has occasioned, have been urged as objections to it. This, likewise, certainly should not be mentioned till it can be shown, that there is one benefit or blessing enjoyed by mankind, which has not been the occasion of evils. How easy would it be to reckon up many dreadful calamities, which owe their existence to knowledge, to liberty, to natural religion, and to

civil government? How obvious is it, that what is in its nature most useful and excellent, will for this very reason become most hurtful and pernicious when misapplied or abused? Christianity forbids every evil work. Its spirit is the spirit of forbearance, meekness, and benevolence. Were it to prevail in its genuine purity, and be universally practised, peace and joy would reign ever more. Uncharitableness, priestcraft, contention, and persecution, are evils which have taken place among its professors, in direct opposition to its scope and design. Is it not then hard, that it should be made responsible for these? Has it not a right to be judged by its genius and tendencies, rather than by any mischief, which blindness and bigotry, and the love of domination have done in the Christian church? For my own part, when I contemplate the horrid scenes which ecclesiastical history presents to our view, instead of feeling disgust with Christianity, I am struck with the Divine foresight discovered by its founder, when he said, *I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword*; and led to a firmer faith, arising from a reflection on the warning given in the scriptures, that an apostacy would come, and a savage power appear, which would defile God's sanctuary, trample on truth and liberty, and make itself drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs!

Dissertations.

ROBERT ROBINSON,

CAMBRIDGE.—DIED 1791.

WHY do you not persecute, at least, with the tongue, those monstrous *Unitarians*? Because I have no warrant from Christ to do so; nor the least inclination to forge one. This is well enough: But why do you praise them in every company? Because a mistaking man may merit praise for that very industry which hath led him into an error; and for that integrity which makes him, against his interest, support it. But what occasion is there to keep company with them, and to maintain an intimacy with them? Because on every other article they edify me, and on this we *agree to differ*. In the possession of this truth, I think I have the advantage of them. In regard to many others, I am not worthy to speak to them; I glory in being their disciple. In what light then do you consider a sincere man, who denies our Lord's divinity? In the light of a mistaken brother; in every other attitude an object of esteem, and in that of denying the divinity of my Lord, an object of my tenderest compassion.—All this argues great coldness to your Lord! I would rather be frozen into a formalist, than inflamed with the fire of hell; in the first case, I should be a harmless statue; in the last, a destroyer like the devil.

Which of the ten commandments does a man break by following his *own* convictions in religion? Suppose the worst, that he is in an error; yet *his error remaineth with himself*. Is any of us less wise, less just, or less safe, because another does that for himself which we every day do for ourselves? Our safety is not endangered by his taking the liberty to think for himself: It is we who endanger his safety by taking the liberty to think for him. In such a case, we should be less wise and less just than we ought to be; as he would be if he allowed us to run our liberty into such licentiousness. How is it that men, Christian men too, can see one another's sicknesses, and hear of one another's misfortunes, without any emotions of anger, and with all the feelings of humanity and pity that Christians ought to have for one another; and that they cannot bear to hear a conscientious man avow sentiments different from their own without a red resentment, that like a hot thunder-bolt hisses, and wounds, and kills where it falls? No; it is not justice, it is not prudence, it is not humanity, it is not benevolence, it is not zeal for these dispositions; it seems as if it were the explosion of an infected heart, where the milk of human kindness never flowed. If such emotions can proceed from Christians, we must suppose what we are loth to think; that is, that some Christians are in some unhappy moments di-

vested of all the principles of their holy religion, and actuated by the dispositions of the most ignorant and cruel of mankind. But, say they, though we receive no injury, yet God is dishonoured. Ah! Is God dishonoured? imitate his conduct, then; does he thunder, does he lighten, does he afflict this poor man? Behold his sun enlightens his habitation, his rain refreshes his fields, his gentle breeze fans and animates him every day, his revelation lies always open before him, his throne of mercy is ever accessible to him; and will *you*, rash Christian, will *you* mark him out for vengeance? I repeat it again, imitate your heavenly Father; and, at least, suspend your anger till that day, *when the Lord will make manifest the counsels of men's hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.*

*Plas for the Divinity of Christ,
and Village Sermons.*

CALEB EVANS, D. D.

BRISTOL.—DIED 1791.

IT has never been my custom, as you well know, to give hard names to those that differ from me, even on subjects of the highest importance; and you will not therefore expect any thing of this kind in the present publication.

The wrath of man will never work the righteousness of God; and, I hope, I have learned to tremble at that word of my divine Master, Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? Rail- ing accusations may be as easily applied to the support of error as of truth; and can only tend in either case to inflame, never to convince or persuade. We ought as sincerely and cheer- fully to admire the virtues of those that may differ from us the most widely, as we would wish to detect and avoid their errors. But suf- fer me to caution you against the opposite ex- treme, that of scepticism and indifference—a temper of mind, of all others, the most un- pardonable, and the most pernicious. It is the highest insult we can offer to the God of truth, and has the most direct tendency to banish truth, and with it, all true virtue and happiness, out of the world. But amidst the clash of contending parties, and the jarring of such very discordant sentiments, as are propagated and zealously contended for in what is called the Christian world, in the present day, it becomes more necessary than ever for all that would be able to give a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear, uprightly and impartially to search the scriptures, and judge for themselves. Your faith will otherwise be of no use to you; it will stand in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. Then only, can you re-

ceive the truth so as to derive any saving benefit from it, when you receive it, not as the word of men, but as it is, in truth, the word of God, which also *worketh effectually in them that believe*. The truth will be of no avail to you if you are not *sanctified* by it, and made *real* Christians. And then only will you recommend it to others, to any good purpose, when it appears that you yourselves have been made by it truly humble, holy, heavenly minded, useful, active, and benevolent, *abounding in every good word and work*, as those that are wisely persuaded *their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*.

In the early ages of Christianity there were converts, not a few, from amongst the Jewish priests and the Pagan philosophers; men as eminent for their learning and the splendour of their talents, as they were, even still more after their conversion, for their faith and humble piety. The primitive church could boast of a Paul, a Polycarp, a Chrysostom, an Irenus, a Justin Martyr, a Tertullian, with a multitude of others, who were bright ornaments to the cause of Christ and Christianity; and to the two last of whom we are indebted for two of the most able and eloquent apologies for Christianity, that, perhaps, were ever penned. In latter ages we have had an Erasmus, a Bacon, a Boyle, a Grotius, a Butler, and Edwards, with

an host of other luminaries, who have not been ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. *Christ's kingdom* is *not* indeed of *this world*, and we do not, therefore, consider the literature, or external splendor of the members of it, as constituting any part of its essential and distinguishing glory. It is, however, pleasing to find that in every age the Christian Church has nourished in her bosom, those whose talents have been as brilliant as their humility and piety have been eminent and edifying. Can it be supposed they lost their *reason* when they became Christians? Or did they not then become more illustrious than ever in *the use and exercise* of it? *To them that were called both Jews and Greeks*, learned and unlearned, *the gospel was the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Discourses on the Atonement.

MICAJAH TOWGOOD,

EXETER.—DIED 1792.

THE foundation of all beauty, an ingenious author has observed, is *uniformity amidst variety*. That the great founder of the Christian church hath, in this respect, formed it with admirable beauty, an attentive observer will evidently see. For amidst the infinite variety of gifts

and endowments of ranks and offices, of sentiments and opinions, which his wisdom permits, or his counsel ordains, a delightful union, or uniformity, is expressly established. All the differently minded Christians are to be united in perfect charity; and, notwithstanding their diversity of sentiments and speculations, they are all to sit at one table, and to eat as of the same bread, and to drink as of the same sacramental cup, in token of their being fellow members of the same household of faith, and of their unfeigned love to one another. As far, therefore, as we destroy this unity or communion, by causeless separations, or hinder it from taking place, so far we hurt the beauty and the glory of the church, which is called the spouse of Jesus Christ. Should not this consideration engage the various sects and parties amongst Christians, to heal the unhappy breach their separation have made, and to receive one another to the common table of their Lord? Shall the *one* body, the visible church of Christ, setting up a table in opposition to others, fencing it round with the peculiarities of their sect, and suffering none to eat with them but those who comply with the same gestures and modes, and forms of thinking, or at least of speaking with themselves? Is this that unity of spirit—that communion of saints—that mutual forbearance and fellowship with one another, which Christianity enjoins? No; but the glorious symmetry of that

living temple, the body and church of Christ, is hereby grievously hurt; envyings, mutual jealousies, animosities, and party zeal, too naturally creep in, and sour and contract the mind. Infidels insult, Christianity is wounded in the house of its friends, and charity, its *life*, runs out at the wounds!

Thus the religion of our Lord, that blessed Herald and Prince of Peace, which was mercifully designed, and is admirably formed to unite men's discordant minds, becomes the unhappy means of setting them at a greater variance, and of rendering them more estranged and unfriendly to one another. Ought these things to be so, Christians? We all know they ought not. Let us each do what in him lies to heal the fatal breaches which have been so long the disgrace, and had not Almighty Providence mercifully interposed, must long, ere this hour, have been the destruction of the Christian church. Let the worthy name of Christ be no more blasphemed, nor his religion despised, through the excess of our zeal about ritual, circumstantial, and speculative matters. As the wisdom of God hath left them, perhaps, purposely surrounded with some degree of darkness, for the proof of our *humility, moderation, and condescension* to one another; let us improve it to this happy end, by which we shall at once both reflect honour on our religion, and lay up for ourselves distinguished glory in heaven.

Catholic Christianity.

SAMUEL STENNETT, D. D.

DIED 1795 *.

THAT men do reason very differently, and that too upon essential points of divine revelation, is acknowledged; and that many do make religion to consist in what does not really belong to it, and profess themselves to be what they are not, is likewise as certain. But it does not follow from these abuses of religion, that it is itself a vague, loose, and uncertain thing. There is but *one way* to heaven; and however the apprehensions of good men themselves, as to some lesser things, may not be alike clear, and their external forms of profession may, in many respects differ, yet the leading principles of their judgment, and the main feelings and experiences of their hearts, are strictly analagous and similar. Be not shocked, therefore, at the different appearances religion may assume. They are easily to be accounted for upon this plain and acknowledged principle, that, at the present, *we know in*

* A new edition of the *Discourses on Personal Religion*, whence the above extract is taken, has been announced by his son, the Rev. Joseph Stennett. Should this edition be accompanied with the life of his worthy father, it will render it a still more valuable acquisition. May the sentiments contained, and the spirit displayed in these discourses, be lastingly impressed on the minds of the rising generation.

part, and prophesy in part; and that the best of us are subject to prejudices, which, through various causes, are almost unconquerable. Religion is, however, but *one thing*; and if you are so happy as really to know and feel what it is, you will have the *testimony* of all good men, of every age, kindred, nation, and tongue, to join you in your humble and cheerful profession of it.

As we ought all to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, so we are obliged, by the simplicity and sameness of that divine spirit and temper which hath been infused into our hearts, *most sincerely and affectionately to love one another*. If the laws of humanity constrain us to express a tender regard towards mankind in general, purely upon this principle, that they partake of the same nature with ourselves; the argument must receive additional strength when it comes clothed with all the native dignity and generosity which religion gives it—at the same time presenting to our view the good man, who is born from above, as the object of this our esteem and affection. Can we believe him to be the offspring of God—the brother of Jesus, and a partaker of the same nature with ourselves; and not embrace him with the utmost cordiality in the arms of Christian charity? God forbid that we should be insensible to such divine impressions! *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God, and know-*

eth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. May this temper live and increase in each of our hearts, so proving us to be the disciples of Jesus ; till at length it shall arrive at its utmost perfection in the realms of light and glory above !

Discourses on Personal Religion.

ANDREW KIPPIS, D. D. F. R. S. and S. A.

DIED 1795.

RELIGIOUS differences are a mighty cause of the disputes and aversions that have taken place in the earth. In consequence of religious differences, mankind have been ready to view one another in a light peculiarly odious, and to cherish the most unfriendly, and even the most malignant sentiments. The quarrels that have arisen from this origin have been always too generally prevalent ; and it is, alas ! to be feared, that they will continue to prevail for ages yet to come. The effects of a temper of this kind must be extremely bad, if we consider the matter in a moral and religious light. What can be more contrary to the genius ; what more contrary to the precepts of the gospel, than strife, anger, and hatred ? Does not the Christian revelation perpetually urge upon us the loveliest, the gentlest graces and virtues ? What was the character, and what the deportment of our blessed Saviour ? Was not

his character, altogether, composed of benevolence, humanity, mildness, and courtesy? Was not his deportment perfectly peaceable, kind, and tender? Did he ever engage in angry debates and quarrels with his neighbours? Did he ever disturb the repose of those around him, by a contentious and turbulent behaviour? Did he ever give way to the feelings of resentment and malice? On the contrary, was it not his intention to render us truly *the sons of peace*; to make us at peace with God, at peace with ourselves, and at peace with each other? For this purpose he endured the labours and sufferings of this mortal life; and for this purpose he died upon the cross. He hath set before us the strongest motives, and laid us under the highest obligations, to cultivate the utmost friendship, agreement, and harmony of our fellow-creatures. If, therefore, we are possessed of a different disposition; if our hearts are full of wrath and strife, and rancour; if we fall out by the way, and turn the earth, as far as in us lies, into a dreary and uncomfortable scene, what will be the consequence? Why, as by such a temper and conduct we act directly reverse to the genius and design of our holy religion, the consequence must be to the last degree fatal. If we have not *the spirit of Christ*, we can be none of his. We must, in such a case, have our portion with those who were contentious, who did not obey the truth, and were the slaves of their corrupt and turbulent passions.

And now, if my voice could be heard, I would ardently and affectionately call upon the bigots and persecutors of the globe, no longer to violate the rights of conscience; but to grant to every man the privilege of worshipping his God and Father, in the manner that is agreeable to the dictates of his own mind. Be persuaded, since ye are disciples of the same master, to live in love; even as Christ also loved you; and do not permit any differences in religious sentiments to interrupt the harmonious agreement with which it behoves you to march on in the road that leads to the mansions of glory. In short, let each of us in our several stations and connections, be studious to cultivate the sentiments of universal meekness, good-will, and benevolence; and let us constantly attend to the mighty arguments and motives to this purpose, which are set before us in the gospel. If thus we be careful not to fall out by the way, we shall enjoy the truest satisfaction which the present life can afford, and shall be preparing for the realms of complete concord and blessedness.

Sermons.

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR, D. D. *

BIGOTS there may be, and have been of all persuasions; but an implacable, irreconcilable, cruel Christian, is of the same figure of

* In 1749, Dr. Grosvenor retired from all public services, and died 1758, in the 83d year of his age. He published many single sermons, the most distinguishing of

speech as a godly adulterer, a religious drunkard, or a devout murderer. A religion that inspires cruelty and revenge; that is so far from forgiving injuries, that it multiplies them upon such as desire to injure nobody; that can allow its votaries to contrive, as near as possible, the misery of poor people in this world, or their damnation in the next; as they do, undeniably, who first tempt a poor creature to shipwreck his conscience, and strain upon him for not doing it; first tempt a man to be a hypocrite, and next punish him for not being so: I say a religion of this complexion needs no stronger confutation, nor can be better proved to be none of *his*, than to be compared with the temper and spirit, with

which was one on the *Temper of Jesus*, which was reprinted at Cambridge in 1785—it was a transcript of his own heart and life—An *Essay on Health*, and an excellent treatise, entitled *The Mourner*, both of which have passed through several editions, and will continue to be memorials of his genius, learning, and spirit. Of the latter, the following passage in his diary, is an amiable specimen: “I thank God!” says he, “for that temper of mind and genius, which has made it natural for me to have an aversion to *bigotry*. This has improved constantly with my knowledge. And the enlarging my mind towards those who differed from me, has kept pace with my illumination and intellectual improvements. *Agree to differ* is a good motto. The *reason* and *loveliness* of such a friendly disposition would recommend it; and I am persuaded people would almost take it of themselves; if it were not for the several *arts* used to prevent it.”

Toulmin's Life of Neal, prefixed to his new edition of the History of the Puritans.

the carriage and commission of *the lovely Jesus*. For, O Lord ! where didst thou ever put fire and sword, prisons, halters, and gibbets, into thy commission ? Or what was ever seen in *thee*, that could look like approving of any such kind of methods ? Hadst thou ever said to thine apostles, go—*preach the gospel, beginning at Jérusalem* ; and they that will not believe, as you bid them, plunder, imprison, and starve them ? Didst thou ever give thine apostles such powers ? Are men to be *forced* by pain into the belief that this Jesus was the most merciful being, that his religion was the kindest thing in the world, and that his ministers are all sons of benignity and peace ; and if they will not believe it, to call for the jailor and the rack to prove it. Such a commission would rather be supposed to come from *Ahollyon* the destroyer, than from *Jesus*, the Saviour of mankind—*who came into the world not to destroy men's lives, but to save : to make the lamb and the wolf feed together—that there might be no more destroying nor hurting, in all thy holy mountain.*

If the history of the world had ever afforded an instance of a good prince, whose government was most rightful ; his administration, according to the best laws, tempered with equity and moderation ; his temper gentle and mild, most affable and condescending ; one that treated his subjects as any father could do his children, laying himself out entirely for their benefit and service ; so that the people could not but own *he had done all*

things well : How surprising—would it be to find, after all, that this *good prince* was assassinated by those whom he had most obliged ; that there should be any beings, on this side hell, capable of such a thing ? Well—in the last agonies of his life, he calls some friends about him, and says to this purpose—I am dying of the wounds they have given me ; I had reason to expect a kinder return—however, I forbid all revenge upon any of those that relent upon it ; and, before I die, I order that there be an act of grace forthwith drawn up and proclaimed, for the pardon of my murderers, upon condition only, that they be sensible of what they have done, that they acknowledge their faults ; and to give them assurance that they may depend upon it, I will have it subscribed and sealed with some of that very blood which they have drawn. And since I find myself dying away, I do command, with my last breath, that the heralds who shall proclaim this, do send the *first* copy of it to him that gave me the first wound, and the *second* to him that struck the deepest—and so gave up the Ghost. How would all the annals have rung of such an instance as this ? What a noise would it have made in the world ! His name would have stood for the figure of all goodness ! Arts and sciences would have lavished all their treasures upon the memory of so much grace, the historian, the orator, the poet, the painter, the statuary ; nor would they have refrained from raising altars to

so much divinity incarnate.—There is a person of whom all this is fact ; there is a name to which this is due—'tis thine, *Oh Jesus !* that lovely name ; even Jesus, that hath *delivered us from wrath to come*, by dying under our hands and for our sakes.

Jesus ! with what a mind and frame of soul didst thou leave this world and go up to heaven ? And art thou still the same ? Has the highest place in heaven only enlarged thy power of doing good according to the established economy and order of grace ? And is that grace still as free, as full, as extensive, as sufficient, as when first offered to *Jerusalem* ? Then I am thy captive, for who can hold out against all this ? Who can deny any thing to it ? Hear me but in the following prayer—that some portion of the same spirit that renders *thee* so lovely, may descend upon me, and then I am sure to be beloved by thee ; for if this be thy carriage towards thine enemies, what is thy heart towards them that love thee as their own souls ? Let, therefore, all those passions and affections, that held the apostles in ecstasy of attention, when they beheld at parting, the sweet majesty of thy humble grandeur ; when they beheld the marks of thy late sufferings, and of present authority, of *all power in heaven and earth*, and of *brotherly love*, at once seated in thy divine aspect ; when they beheld the heavens opening, heir Lord ascending, and followed thee with

eyes drowned in love, and stretching with curious wonder into the celestial presence; let the *same* passions and affections so possess my soul, and devote me to thyself and service, that I may never give over looking upwards in expectation—till I shall behold thee, IN LIKE MANNER, COMING THE SECOND TIME, WITHOUT SIN, UNTO SALVATION. AMEN..

The Tempter of Jesus.



BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

1. **A**N ADDRESS, humbly designed to promote the Revival of Religion (more especially) amongst the General Baptists. Second edition, enlarged and revised. Price 2d. or 1s. 6d. per dozen to give away.

2. **JUVENILE PIECES**, designed for the Youth of both Sexes. Second edition, enlarged and corrected—embellished with an elegant **FRONTISPIECE**. Price 2s. 6d.

3. **A SKETCH OF THE SEVERAL DENOMINATIONS** into which the Christian World is divided—accompanied with a persuasive to **RELIGIOUS MODERATION**; to which is prefixed, a short Account of Atheism, Deism, Judaism, and Christianity, adapted to the present Times. Second edition, with considerable additions. Price 2s.

4. **A SERMON** preached at Worship Street, Shoreditch, October 18, 1795; being a sincere Tribute of Respect to the Memory of the Re-

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

verend SAMUEL STENNETT, D. D.; the Reverend ANDREW KIPPIS, D. D. F. R. S. and A. S.; and the Reverend RICE HARRIS, D. D.; to which are prefixed a few Particulars of their Lives and Writings; published by request. Price 1s.

Insatiate archer ! could not *one* suffice ?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain ;
And thrice e're thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn !

YOUNG.

"The decease of valuable men, who have distinguished themselves in a public capacity, is an interesting event which may properly furnish an occasion for pathetic declamation, and moral instruction. Mr. Evans has, in this discourse, made a pertinent improvement of the recent death, of three eminent ministers. The discourse is methodically constructed, is written with animation, and discovers a laudable, and not illiberal zeal, for the interests of religion. The memoirs prefixed are brief, but candid and interesting."

Monthly Review for January, 1796.

See also the *Analytical Review* for December, 1795.





